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THEATRE OF LIFE

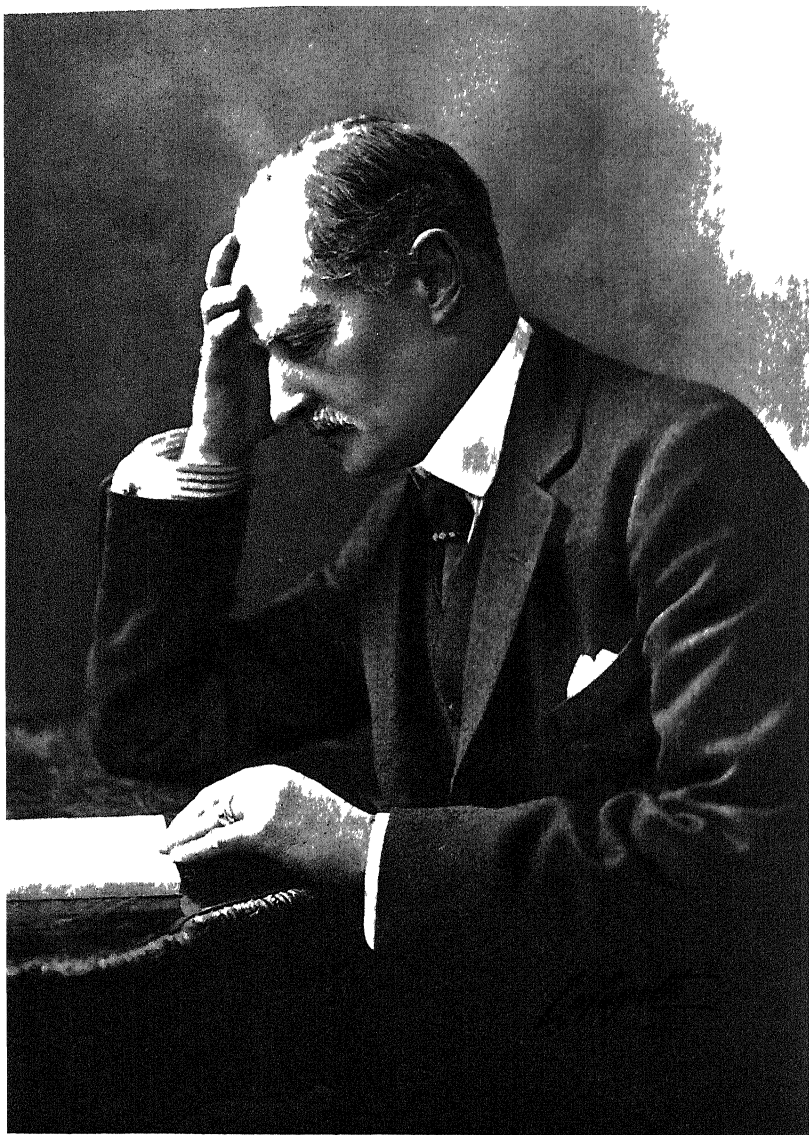


Photo Lafayette

Sir Esme Howard
H. Ms Ambassador to Spain 1919

THEATRE OF LIFE

BY
LORD HOWARD OF PENRITH



LIFE SEEN FROM THE PIT

1863—1905

LONDON
HODDER AND STOUGHTON LIMITED

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FOREWORD

*Lyulph's Tower,
Ullswater,
Penrith.
June, 1934.*

TO FRANCIS, HUBERT, EDMUND AND HENRY.

CARISSIMI—

The idea of writing a book on these lines occurred to me first in the Clinique at Neufchâtel, where I spent most sadly part of September and October, 1926, with our dearest Esme and Mamina shortly before his death. I thought it might cheer and amuse him in his illness.

He welcomed the idea and I began to make a draft.

Then when he left us I had no heart to go on, and destroyed what I had written.

Now, however, because you have asked me to set down for you my experiences of life, I do so hoping you may be entertained, and perhaps here and there learn something thereby.

One thing, however, I wish to make quite clear. This book, such as it is, is intended for you and your children.

If it should ever be read by anyone outside the family circle, and should be considered by them to be trivial, uninteresting, in bad taste or dull, that will not trouble me. It may very well be all these things.

But if it gives you any satisfaction I shall be well content.

Because I have, more than many men, had a front seat both in the pit and in the stalls of Life's Theatre, varied with an occasional visit behind the scenes, I have called this book "Theatre of Life."

I may add that, having never kept a diary on principle, there may be some minor inaccuracies in a book of this kind based almost entirely on memory and such public papers as I have been allowed to consult. The general trend, however, of events with which I have been connected will, I believe, be found to have been described with truth, and at least nothing will have been set down in malice.

Your very loving
FATHER.

CHAPTER I

GREYSTOKE,¹ THORNBURY, SCHOOL

(1863-1881)

THERE was nothing remarkable about my childhood except its complete happiness. This, naturally, like all children, who are the first and greatest philosophers, I took as a matter of course, and could never understand what my elders meant when they said I ought to be grateful to God Who had given me so many good things. The good things came to me, it seemed, as of right, and I saw no reason why I should be grateful to anyone, least of all, perhaps, to One who was so far from my own day and world as God, Who was then mainly connected in my mind with family prayers and long services in the parish churches at Greystoke and Thornbury on Sundays. God had also ordered, on pain of some unknown penalty, that on Sundays, when there were no lessons, there should be no play, which to my childish mind seemed both vexatious and tantalising. The only thing I was allowed to do after church, where the length of an apparently interminable Litany and sermon should surely have been compensated for by some little game after, was a family walk accompanied by the many dogs of the house. The dogs, of course, would hunt rabbits even on Sundays. Trying to stop them from that godless habit provided a certain amount of exercise and excitement for the youthful limbs of my brothers and sisters and myself. So long, however, as I was too young to enjoy this form of sport—which is what it amounted to, for occasionally the evil-doing dogs would go so far as to kill a rabbit—I had no relaxation

¹ Pronounced Greystock as originally spelt.

in the country but the German songs and fairy-tales (mostly Grimms', which I adored) of my beloved old German nurse, Jacobina Bottner, who came from St. Goar am Rhein, almost opposite the Lorelei. From her I learnt to sing :

“ *Ich weiss nicht wass soll es bedeuten* ”

and

“ *Sie sollen ihn nicht haben den schonen Deutschen Rhein.* ”

She also read me the poems and plays of Schiller—*Egmont, Wallenstein, Die Jungfrau von Orleans, Die Glocke*—and the patriotic poems of Uhland. It is no wonder that I became almost a little German. My brothers and sisters, who remembered the war between Prussia and Denmark of 1864, over Schleswig-Holstein, had then, like most English people, sided strongly with the weaker Power. When, however, the War of 1870 broke out between France and Germany, we were all passionately united in favour of Germany, and my dear old “ Binchen,” as I called Jacobina, was like a *cog-en-pate* in the midst of so pro-German a family. The French stood for all that was evil, the Germans for all that was virtuous. The Almighty naturally supported the virtuous side, which settled all doubts.

I remember a heated argument with one of my aunts who took the French side. I was horrified at any respectable person taking the side of vice in this open way, and told her so, at a family luncheon, which led to my being severely rebuked, *coram publico*, by my mother. I thought this most unjust, because my mother was just as pro-German and anti-French as the rest of us, and I was puzzled by it. Was I not taking the side of God ? Surely I deserved praise.

My old nurse, Binchen—I mention her first of all the *dramatis personæ* of this book because she loomed almost larger than anyone in my memories of those early days—was very devout in a strict Lutheran sense, and used to tell me of the enormities practised by Catholics in

St. Goar and the neighbouring villages. They even had dances on Sundays, and one of her Lutheran cousins, a worldly young man, had been tempted to go to such a dance at Boppart. He died a few weeks later of small-pox, an obvious punishment for godlessness.

These and similar instances of the wickedness of Catholics made me feel that they were people too dangerous to be allowed abroad, and being of a somewhat adventurous and imaginative disposition, I at an early age hesitated in the choice of a future career between that of an Indian Chief like Paupukeewis (I loved the tale of *Hiawatha*) or an eloquent Protestant missionary who should convert the Chief, and save him, above all, from the wiles of the Church of Rome.

One night, after I had gone to bed, Binchen returned from supper and caught me standing on my bed in my nightgown, with a pillow on my head, preaching to an imaginary congregation. She naturally wanted to know what this meant. I explained that I was converting Red Indians, and warning them especially against false prophets who wore mitres and things of that kind on their heads. I imagine this must have given the dear old thing much satisfaction, but as, more Teutonic, she was more afraid of colds in the head than even of the devil, she just hustled me into bed. "Binchen" stayed with us for years after I went to school, and in my school-days used at times to embarrass me by her truly Teutonic sentimentality. On one occasion when I was about seventeen, and a monitor at Harrow in the Upper Sixth, she insisted on being photographed hand in hand with me in an arbour of flowering roses. I came on this photograph only a short while ago, and it brought back to me my acute fears that a copy of the photograph should fall into the hands of my schoolfellows. I now recall my fears with a proper sense of shame, but suppose they would have been shared by almost any schoolboy of that age. Binchen finally retired to St. Goar, whence she used to write to me at regular intervals, to which, I fear, I used to reply less regularly.

In 1930, motoring back to England from Italy, I stopped at St. Goar to see her relatives and to visit her grave. To my sorrow I found that the grave had been, as was the custom in the cemetery, opened and her ashes put into a common grave, in order to make way for some new-comer. She was, with all her prejudices, indeed a good, kind soul. May she rest in peace.

Of the *dramatis personæ* of my early youth, my mother, of course, stands out head and shoulders above all. I was much spoilt, I fear, as a child, being the son of the old age of my father, who was sixty at my birth, while my mother was forty.

My mother was the eldest of a beautiful bevy of daughters of Henry Lawes Long, of Hampton Lodge, Farnham, which she inherited on the death of her brother Henry at an early age. Her mother was Lady Catherine Walpole, daughter of the Earl of Orford.

I can just remember these grandparents. My grandfather was a handsome old man of well over six feet in height, with singular charm and kindness that attracted me even as a small boy. He was a finished Greek and Latin scholar, and devoted to natural science and natural history, a good deal of an antiquarian and a great reader. All this I learnt from my mother, who adored her father. He was not, however, a good man of business. The Longs had been connected with Jamaica since the conquest of the Island. Old Samuel Long went out with the Cromwellian expedition of conquest, received a large grant of land, became the first Speaker of the Jamaica Parliament, and after a somewhat chequered career (he was at one time arrested by the Governor, Lord Carlisle, and sent to England a prisoner, but defended himself so successfully before Parliament that he was reinstated and the Governor recalled), passed away in the odour of such sanctity as the Jamaica of that day could muster, leaving a large fortune in lands and slaves to his successors. On a visit to Jamaica in 1929, I discovered his tomb in the old Cathedral at Spanish Town, half covered over by a brass eagle that served as a lectern.



Photograph by Mrs. Cameron, of Freshwater]

ESME HOWARD, AGED FOUR

Most of my grandfather's fortune being in sugar in the West Indies, he was of course hard hit, first by the abolition of slavery, and secondly by the introduction of free imports of sugar to England which completed the ruin of the West Indies. He had, therefore, to let his charming place, Hampton Lodge, and the family lived a more or less vagrant life, taking houses here and there in England or in Switzerland or Belgium or Germany, for the education of the children.

He and his wife, after the daughters were all married but one, finally settled down in a little house called "Landthorn," in the village of Seale, on his Hampton property.

Lady Catherine was a very different character, very pious and evangelical in her old age. I don't know what she was in her youth, but if she was pious and evangelical then, she must have been an exception in her family. She wrote pious and evangelical novels in three volumes for the benefit of the family finances. I have read one or two of these as a family duty, and also with a certain interest as being characteristic of the mentality of that period, but I doubt whether they ever, even in those days, could have much assisted the family finances.

One slight link with her, besides a beautiful miniature of her as a girl, I still possess, which throws some light on the atmosphere which surrounded the Walpole family at the beginning of last century. It is a volume of Essays on Petrarch, by Ugo Foscolo, written when in exile in the eighteen-twenties, and dedicated to her before her marriage.

This connection between my grandmother's family and the Italian political exiles of that time led to my becoming acquainted years after in Bologna with Aurelio Saffi, who, with Garibaldi and Mazzini, was one of the triumvirate which, for a short time, seized and governed the City of Rome in 1848. I shall mention him later.

It was possibly this connection of the Walpoles with Italy which, quite apart from my mother's profound love of everything beautiful, whether in art or nature, attached

her so warmly to Italy and everything Italian, and, in its turn, profoundly affected my life.

My father, when I first remember him, was already between sixty and seventy and an old man for his age, being a confirmed invalid. Though he was always most kind and affectionate to me, he could not be anything of a companion. He used to like me to accompany him when he hobbled about on two sticks, and I used to go up to his room when he had his supper and get titbits from him, especially marrow-bones, and read him a psalm before I went to bed. But otherwise I remember little. He had been a great rider and fox-hunter in his day, and is one of the central figures in a picture of the Beaufort Hunt which has been engraved. His old coachman, Borecombe, who had been his stud-groom, told us how, in the days before railways (my father was born in 1802), my father, with two grooms and five or six horses, used to ride north in springtime from Thornbury in Gloucestershire to Greystoke in Cumberland, and south again in autumn from Cumberland to Gloucestershire, hunting with different packs as he went. When railways started he was one of their first supporters, and a guarantor of the Lancashire and Carlisle Railway for a heavy sum. He refused to accept anything when the railway was merged with the London and North Western Railway later, except an inkstand of Shap granite with silver tops and an inscription, which was presented to him by his co-directors. The Lancashire and Carlisle Railway running over Shap Fell was, when it was built, the highest railway in the world and, I believe, the steepest gradient. My father's interest in railways continued up to the day of his death. He was a good man of business and left his estates in excellent order.

My father remembered old Charles Duke of Norfolk (known to Creevy and others of that day as "the Jockey of Norfolk") well, for he and my grandfather, Lord Henry Molyneux Howard, lived with their family at Park House, Arundel, as long as the old Duke lived.

My father had many stories about him, most of which

I have unfortunately forgotten. One was how, in order not to be recognised at the auction sale of Threlkeld Hall, a Manor which he wished to buy, he changed clothes with a tinker on the way from Greystoke to Threlkeld, and looked the part so thoroughly that, for a jest, the auctioneer knocked the place down to him for a song, never thinking such a disreputable old man could ever pay. The auctioneer's surprise was great when he received a roll of notes and a promise to pay the balance, signed "Norfolk."

Another story my father used to tell with a chuckle was that on one occasion, on a wet summer's day, he was driving from London to Arundel with his mother and the old Duke, who was exceedingly unwashed and slovenly in his habits. My father, who was a small boy, asked where they were. His mother said: "On the Hog's Back" (the road between Guildford and Farnham). "That's why there's such a nasty smell," said my father, who was promptly silenced by his mother, who was terrified that the old man should hear and take offence, and leave Greystoke to someone else.

It was said that when the Jockey came up to Greystoke, one of his principal cronies was Mr. Huddleston of Hutton John, because, when they sat together over their port, whilst the Duke first lost the use of his legs, Mr. Huddleston first lost that of his tongue. When the port on the table was finished, Huddleston could get up and ring the bell, and the Duke could order more wine of the vintage desired.

The old Jockey was also a great rival of the Lord Lonsdale of that date on the racecourse, but judging by the amount of plate with the Howard arms which decorates the dining-room at Lowther, it is probable that he came off second-best.

Being also an ardent Whig and a supporter of and friend of Charles James Fox, not only at Brooks's over the card tables, but also in politics, he took the side of the American Revolution. He even went so far as to call the farms which he built at Greystoke, in the Strawberry

Hill Gothic style fashionable at that time, "Putnam," after the American General, and "Bunker's Hill" after that General's first success over the British troops, and also called a wood he planted near the Castle at Greystoke, "Jefferson," after the author of the "Declaration of Independence."

When I had to address the Daughters of the American Revolution for the first time after becoming Ambassador at Washington, I was able to tell them quite truly that, owing to these names at my birthplace, I had grown up, so to speak, under the shadow of the first makers of the United States.

I do not know how people felt towards the Jockey at the time, but I at least was grateful to him for giving me something to say during what was to me, at first at least, an alarming ordeal.

Greystoke, when I was a child, was a strange mixture of Whig and Stuart traditions, of Protestant and Catholic atmosphere. The Whig and Protestant traditions and atmosphere came from the Jockey who still, many years after his death, dominated the scene for us children, and whose portrait by Romney hung in the dining-room. The Stuart and Catholic atmosphere came from the place itself.

Anne Dacre, the wife of Blessed Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel,¹ was the heiress of Greystoke, and her portrait, with one of the few full-length authentic portraits of Mary Queen of Scots, hung on the staircase and was burnt in the disastrous fire of 1868. There are still portraits of all the Stuarts hanging on the wall from James I to the "young Pretender," who is represented by one of the curious portraits that were sent round to Northern houses likely to support the cause before 1745. There is also a piece of work said to be by Mary Queen of Scots, representing the Crucifixion, given by her cousin the Duchess of Lennox to the Duchess's daughter, Elizabeth

¹ Blessed Philip Howard was beatified 1929 as one of the English Catholic Martyrs under Elizabeth. A beautiful inscription carved by him on the walls of his cell in the Tower of London is still to be seen there.



GREYSTOKE CASTLE, WEST FRONT

Stuart, Countess of Arundel. This fortunately was not burnt.

Then in the hall there was a most curious and most ancient broad-brimmed straw hat which, legend had it, was the hat of Thomas à Becket, and a little picture of the same Saint by Van Eyck, since sold, and also a seventeenth century Cardinal's hat, which must I suppose have belonged to Philip, Cardinal Howard.

Further, had not Greystoke been bombarded and three of the old towers been destroyed by General Lambert on behalf of Cromwell, and had not his troops also broken to pieces the magnificent thirteenth century east window in the parish church, the pieces of which were collected and later put together as far as possible by my father and Mr. Askew, the then Rector of Greystoke?

My mother used to show me the places in the park where Lambert's guns were put for the bombardment, and told me about the window and I hated him and all his works. My prejudice against him extended to Oliver Cromwell and all his works. They became for me gross destroyers of beautiful things which were among the things that really mattered.

One other interesting tradition Greystoke possessed. There were on the old oak stairs the marks of the nails in the shoes of "Belted Will's" horse, who had ridden up them for a wager. He also died there of smallpox and is buried in the parish church in the old family vault.

Strangely enough, I only learnt of Shelley's having spent part of his first honeymoon at Greystoke as guest of the old Jockey, from André Maurois's *Life of the poet*. The Jockey heard that Shelley and Harriet were living half starved at Keswick and invited them to stay at Greystoke, for, with all his faults, he possessed a kind heart which, Tennyson somewhat ponderously assures us, is more than a coronet. I never heard of the old place harbouring any other literary celebrity.

Parts of the house were very old, going back, it was said, to the twelfth century, and it is possible that some sort of stockaded fort existed there before the Conquest,

since the termination "stock" derives from the Norse stocks or stockade. Greystock, as it is properly written, was one of the four or five baronies into which Cumberland was divided at the Conquest. After 1066 it passed by inheritance through two families of the Barons of Greystock to the Dacres of Gilsland and, in the reign of Elizabeth, to the Howards. It was allowed to be regularly fortified in the reign of Edward III.

Of the old house but little remains except one tower, spared by the cannon of General Lambert, and some parts of the old walls on the south side, in which there is still an old stair in the thickness of the wall, known as the "priest's hole" by which the priest, who lived there all through the years of the Protestant Inquisition, could escape.

The Jockey, though he himself, as the saying goes, "embraced" the Protestant religion, never did away with the chapel or dismissed the priest. My father, on succeeding, I believe, allowed the priest to live on in the village, but pulled down the chapel, giving the beautiful old vestments and silver vessels to his friend and kinsman, Mr. Howard of Corby, where I have since seen them.

The exterior of the house was first "restored" by the Jockey in the Strawberry Hill Gothic style which he loved, and then by my father, with the help of the well-known architect, Mr. Salvin, in half Tudor, half Perpendicular, which, with odd bits of the old fortress sticking out here and there, produces a general effect which is quite pleasing. We all adored it and thought there was nothing more beautiful in the world.

But what made Greystoke a paradise for us children was the park, an enclosed area of some six thousand acres, thirteen miles round, with no public road running through it.

It was not a park in the south of England sense, but a series of pastures and moorland, with woods and tarns and marshes, and some limestone cliffs at the highest part which reached an elevation of twelve hundred feet. From this, called Summer-ground Crag, there are

enchancing views : to the east, across the Penrith Beacon to Cross Fell and the whole Pennine Range ; on the south, Bowes Fell in Yorkshire, and Shap in Westmorland ; to the south-west, the Ullswater Fells, with Helvellyn ; on the west, the Derwentwater Fells, with Saddleback, sharp and jagged, in the middle distance ; on the north, the Solway, and beyond it Scotland, Criffel and the Dumfriesshire hills.

This was our kingdom. Here we could do what we liked. There was every variety of game in small quantities : grouse, black-game, duck, teal, snipe and woodcock, partridges and pheasants, some hares and thousands of rabbits, besides foxes and badgers.

My eldest brother, as soon as he went to Cambridge, kept a pack of harriers, which he hunted himself, and all the rest of us, mounted on our respective ponies, acted as whips. Twice a week at least while at Greystoke we formed a cavalcade, consisting of my eldest brother, Henry, my two other brothers, Stafford and Mowbray, my two sisters, Elsie and Maud, and I on a Shetland pony, and started off to draw some covers in the park. Perhaps I was too young but I certainly never learnt the science of hunting, either then, or later, when my brother Henry was Master of the Cumberland Foxhounds and always mounted me in my holidays. Yet I remember glorious gallops over that splendid rough country, with magnificent views in every direction. It was no wonder it caught hold of the hearts of us all, so that though Stafford inherited Thornbury in Gloucestershire ; Mowbray, Hampton Lodge in Surrey, and of my sisters, after marriage, one lived at Highclere Castle in Hampshire and the other at Littlecote in Wiltshire, all came back to Cumberland when they could and felt it was their real home.

So it has been with me : though I have lived in many lands, I never felt that completely satisfied feeling that " coming home " gives until I had crossed over Shap. The south of England could not be really home to me. It was not the beauty of any particular spot, but just the

Cumberland scene in general, which, more often than not, strikes the new-comer as gloomy, harsh and grey. Perhaps the only non-Cumbrian who has caught the real spirit of this country, and certainly the only man, Cumbrian or not, who has known how to describe its astonishingly fleeting beauties, is Hugh Walpole. Two other parts of the world have wound themselves round my heart, but not in the same intense degree: the Campagna of Rome, and the island of Tobago in the West Indies; but of these I shall speak later.

The first thing I can remember is the fire at Greystoke in 1868, when I was not quite five years old.

I was sleeping with my mother in a four-poster in the old Tower Room and was awakened choking with smoke. Then there was a general bustle. I was wrapped up in a blanket and carried to the schoolroom at the end of the north-west wing where, to my surprise, I found all the rest of the family. I was held up to a window to see the flames coming out of the roof of another part of the house. The wing we were in and the tower were saved by filling the archways leading to the rest of the house with wet mattresses. Unfortunately the old part, with its beautiful hall and staircase and many pictures, tapestries, etc., were burnt.

The estate fire-engine refused to work and old Borecombe, the coachman, was sent on a horse to get a fire-engine from Penrith. It was generally said in the village that he had ridden the five miles in four and a half minutes!

All that was saved, books, pictures, china, furniture, was thrown out on to the gravel in front of the house and very much was broken. Numbers of sightseers and others, less respectable, arrived from Penrith and some of the latter, no doubt, took souvenirs. Our excellent friend, George Mounsey, the mason of the estate, who was ten at the time of the fire, told me years afterwards these details, and added that the children of the work-house in Penrith were given a half-holiday in order to

come out and see the smoking ruins, whether because the sight was to point a moral or adorn a tale history does not relate.

One other incident with regard to my father I must give here. He was extraordinarily particular about never, in any respect, taking more than he believed to be properly his due. He had for years insured the house at Greystoke and its contents against fire. The insurance company, after valuation had been made of the extent of the loss, were, my mother told me, willing to pay the whole sum, but my father, for some reason or other considering that he was not entitled thereto, insisted on accepting a considerably smaller sum. This did not, of course, nearly cover the expense of rebuilding and re-furnishing. There was something of the Don Quixote about my father.

Owing to his being so great an invalid for the last twelve years or so of his life, we lived a very quiet life at Greystoke and Thornbury.

My mother never was a society woman, and my father having long ago sold his London house, she only went to London once or twice a year to order gowns and necessities for herself and her children.

During these visits to London—how I hated them—we were cooped up in a private hotel in Albemarle Street, spent hours in shops, and went to tea with some old cronies of my mother's, ancient ladies who interested me little. Once or twice we went to lunch with Tennyson whom my mother greatly admired and respected. At one of these luncheons, I remember well, he shocked my sense of what was proper for a Poet Laureate by discoursing during the entire meal on the subject of a murder case which was exciting much interest at the time.

The Zoo and Madame Tussaud's afforded agreeable relaxations from the boredom of London, from which I have never really recovered. After Greystoke, London always seemed to me very near being a prison and I have never, even to the present time, quite got over that

feeling. Lord Grey of Fallodon truly expresses it in the *Charm of Birds* when he says :

The lover of the town can never understand the sense of depression, exile and exasperation that the country man feels when brought to live in a great city.

He has forgotten to add the sense of imprisonment and loss of liberty which have always afflicted me in great cities and, above all, in London, on account of those early experiences.

Two visits, however, we yearly paid on our migrations from Thornbury to Greystoke or *vice versa*. One to my aunt, Lady Carnarvon, my father's sister, at Pixton Park, in Somerset, on the borders of Devon ; the other to another of his sisters, Lady Suffolk, at Charlton Park, near Malmesbury. These we always looked forward to, being devoted to our two aunts. My Uncle Carnarvon had died before I arrived on the scene ; my cousin Carnarvon I only got to know later after he married, as his second wife, my eldest sister, Elsie. But his two brothers, Alan, who became a doctor and lived in Paris where he looked after Sir Richard Wallace's Children's Hospital, and Auberon, of whom I shall speak later, we saw frequently and were much attached to.

The atmosphere surrounding the Carnarvon Herberts was literary, scholarly, political, interwoven with a spirit of travel and adventure.

That of the Suffolk Howards, who were a distant branch of our own family, was of the usual hunting, racing, sporting country gentleman type. My Aunt Suffolk, who was, like all my father's sisters, very quiet, devout and evangelical, almost Quaker in spirit, always seemed rather out of place in that *milieu*, but was, I believe, genuinely happy.

My old Uncle Suffolk, a short, stout, farmer-like man, with white mutton-chop whiskers, always dressed in breeches and gaiters, always with a kindly smile for us children and, not infrequently some *gros mot* on his lips,

was also a favourite. He and all his sons had a wonderful sense of humour and amused us all greatly.

On one occasion he enlivened family prayers, which he read every morning, by saying, as soon as he had got up from his knees: "Who the devil let that damned dog into the room during prayers?"

The Suffolk family in those days were not burdened with great wealth. Charlton is one of the most beautiful late Elizabethan houses I know and it contained many treasures, among others the great Leonardo *Vergine delle Rocce*, now in the National Gallery, but it was then in a somewhat dilapidated condition. The central hall was a terribly cold and draughty place, hung with old full-length portraits of Elizabethan Howards at which, I believe, my elder brothers and their Charlton cousins used to shoot with bows and arrows, an exercise which the sporting instincts of old Lord Suffolk probably encouraged. These ravages have since been repaired and the ancestors, clean, untattered and dignified, can now meet without shame the eyes of any passer-by.

Beyond close cousins and one or two old friends of my father's, such as old Mr. Philip Howard, of Corby, who was the first Catholic M.P. after Catholic Emancipation, and always wore a blue coat and brass buttons in the evening, Mr. Charles Howard, of Naworth, brother and heir of the mentally defective Earl of Carlisle, Sir Henry Howard, British Minister at Munich, and his wife, and old Mr. Crackenthorpe, of Newbiggin Hall, Cumberland, no one came to disturb our family party. Mr. Crackenthorpe was born in the eighteenth century and told me once that the pleasantest parties he remembered in Florence as a young man were those given by the Comtesse d'Albany, widow of Prince Charles Edward, the "Young Pretender." This lack of general social intercourse threw us on our own resources and resulted in our becoming very united and so happy together that we did not desire the company of outsiders.

When my elder brothers went to Cambridge their friends used to come from time to time, but I never

remember anything that could be called a party in the house until after my father's death, or, indeed, till after my eldest brother, Harry, married in 1876 Lady Mabel McDonnell, sister of the third Lord Antrim.

Thornbury Castle, which my father inherited from his father, Lord Henry Molyneux Howard, was, architecturally, much more beautiful and interesting than Greystoke. But it was a mere shell of a part of the Castle which Edward de Bohun, Duke of Buckingham, began to build in order to rival the palace which Cardinal Wolsey was building at Hampton Court. Their vain-glory and ambition served neither for, if Buckingham lost his head on an absurd charge of treason, Wolsey lost all but his life.

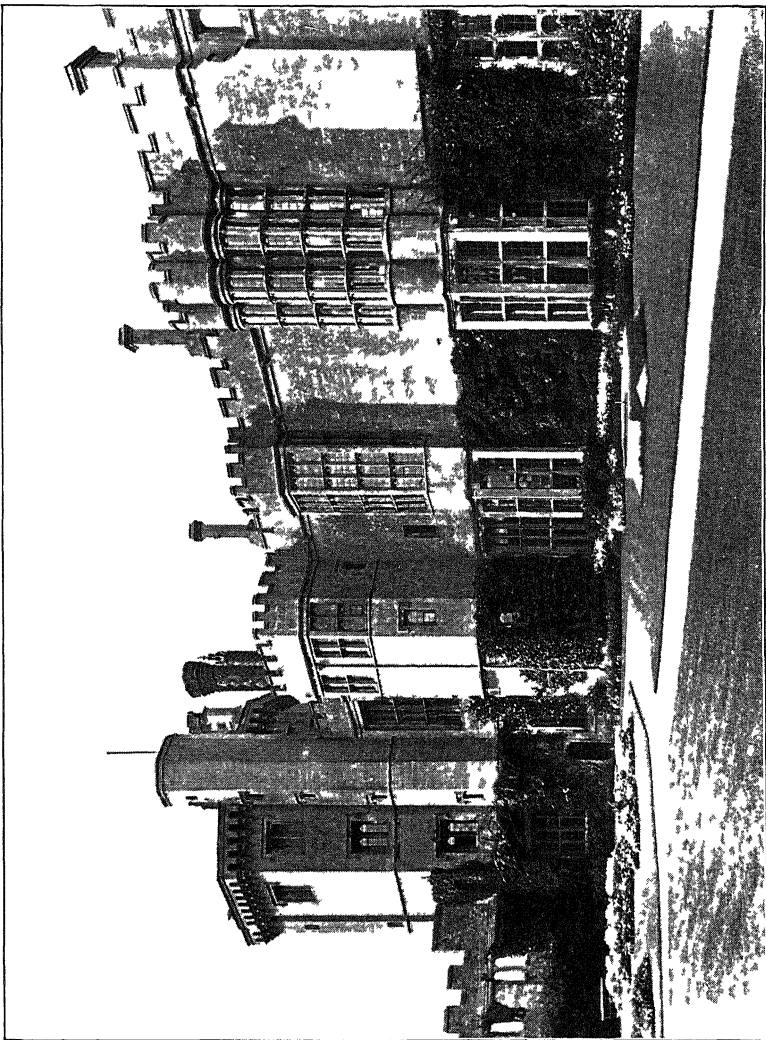
With the help of Salvin, the architect, my father made habitable as much of the ruin as was convenient.

The old enclosed garden, with its great battlemented walls, and the garden front of the Castle with its magnificent windows, form one of the most attractive pieces of the architecture of that period, and first awoke in me a sense of the beauty of architecture, just as the great stained glass window in the church at Greystoke first inspired me with a love of stained glass.

Thornbury came to the Howards through a marriage with an heiress of the Staffords, but only after the Duke's property had been confiscated. It was a tradition that Henry VIII had stayed there with the Duke, and that, after the decapitation of the latter, Princess Mary, afterwards Queen Mary Tudor, lived there for some time; for the place was confiscated to the Crown until it was finally restored, in a ruined condition, to the impoverished Staffords.

Though the ruins were a source of endless delight and adventure to me, as a small boy, Thornbury never possessed at all the same attraction as Greystoke, for there was no park and, outside the walls, no privacy. We lacked the wide, open spaces and "the everlasting wash of air" that we all loved at Greystoke.

It was a great place for hunting, lying between the



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THORNBURY CASTLE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, SOUTH FRONT

Berkeley and the Beaufort Hunts. My brothers all kept hunters, but I was too young when my father died at Thornbury in January, 1875, to enjoy the hunting, and as a family we never lived there again afterwards.

One curious custom obtained at Thornbury, where my father, as Lord of the Manor, had a right to all sturgeon caught in the salmon traps in the Severn which was two miles away. I remember occasionally an enormous sturgeon, which seemed to me like a whale, being laid out on the grass. It was a pity that the Lord of the Manor didn't have a right to some of the salmon. These Severn salmon traps are said to go back to the days of the original British inhabitants, while the Severn wall, which keeps the river within bounds, is undoubtedly of Roman origin.

At the age of ten, to my immense sorrow, I was sent to school. It took me a long time to get accustomed to the ways of boys of my own age which, at first, I thought most disagreeable. My next brother was nine years older than I and though my eldest brother at times teased me unmercifully with the idea of preparing me for the joys of school life, I had no conception of what life among boys of my age implied.

The school, Farnborough, kept by the Rev. A. A. Morton, was what would be called "extremely select" by an agent. It was known at the time as the "House of Lords." I have a vivid recollection of the Rev. A. H. A. Morton, one Sunday afternoon, when we were all walking out in Eton jackets and collars and top-hats, clasping his hands in ecstasy and exclaiming :

"In what other school would you see the sons of three Cabinet Ministers walking together ?"

Rosy Wemyss (afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Lord Wester Wemyss) who was with me, drew my attention to this delicious and naïve piece of snobbery, which I have never forgotten, though I don't remember who the trio in question were.

In less than three years I was head of the school and captain of the cricket eleven, which dual honour I can

only ascribe to the fact that I had so many school-fellows who were the sons of such distinguished parents.

The Rev. A. H. A. Morton was a good teacher and laid in my mind a useful foundation of Latin and Greek, useful for the public school career; but one supreme lesson he taught me for all my life—the ridiculousness and absurdity of a snob.

From Farnborough School I passed to Harrow, to a House then known as “Hutton’s,” the colours of which were blue and white. I began unfortunately, for, having been at a school which prepared exclusively for Eton, I found no old schoolfellows on arrival at Harrow.

There I was fairly successful, both at work and at play, being over a year in the Upper Sixth under the famous Dr. Montagu Butler, and playing cricket for my House in three successive cock-house matches, all of which we won—not, be it said, because of my own prowess, but because we had at all times three members of the school cricket team in the House eleven.

Perhaps, however, the most ecstatically exciting day of my life was that of the first cock-house match I played in. I was still a small boy and I went in last. We had eighteen runs to win. At the other wicket was Willie Bolitho—afterwards of the Harrow and Cambridge eleven—who had already knocked up a good score. It was a nerve-racking ordeal for me. “Stick in whatever you do and let Bolitho make the runs,” I was told as I went down to the Sixth Form cricket pitch. My knees shook under me, but somehow my bat was held straight and defended my wicket. Bolitho hit about freely till a great shout went up from members of our House and told me we had made the necessary eighteen runs. Then I dared to hit a little, and when we drew stumps after having done all that was necessary for honour, I carried my bat with some runs to my credit.

No game, before or since, has ever quite come up to that one, and even the memory of the first salmon caught, or the first South African buffalo that allowed itself to fall a victim to my lack of skill, hardly wake in me more

stirring emotions than the ringing in my ears of the great House cheer when the match was won that day.

Racquets—real racquets—I adored, but never had the stamina at that age to win a long match. Squash I used to play keenly at odd moments with Leo Maxse (of the *National Review*) and George Crawley, and fives I was also very fond of playing with my Mathematical Master, “Frankie” Marshall of Derwentwater, and H. H. Hallam, who took me in Latin verse when I was in the Sixth, both of whom were and remained good friends. The latter married Miss Searle of Horace’s Villa, at Tivoli (otherwise San Antonio), and here I saw him from time to time when I went to Rome, up to 1932, the year of his death. He sent me—to the Embassy at Washington—some delightful Latin elegiacs on a Red Admiral Butterfly he had found in his garden at San Antonio on Christmas Day.

Dr. Montagu Butler, the Head Master, remains strongly impressed on my memory. A wonderful teacher and great classic scholar, he made the classics live as no other master at Harrow. His curiously ultra-polite manner, even, I believe, to boys he was going to swish—an honour I never attained to—and his high falsetto way of talking, made him an easy object of ridicule and a target for imitation; but we all realised that under the very velvet glove there was really a hand of iron with which it might be very unpleasant to come into too active contact.

One other Harrow master—Mr. Glazebrook, a sarcastic gentleman—remains in my memory for something he said. When I was in the Fifth he took me in Latin verses, in which I, without just cause, somewhat fancied myself. One day I showed up a set to him which I thought rather good. Having glanced at them he said:

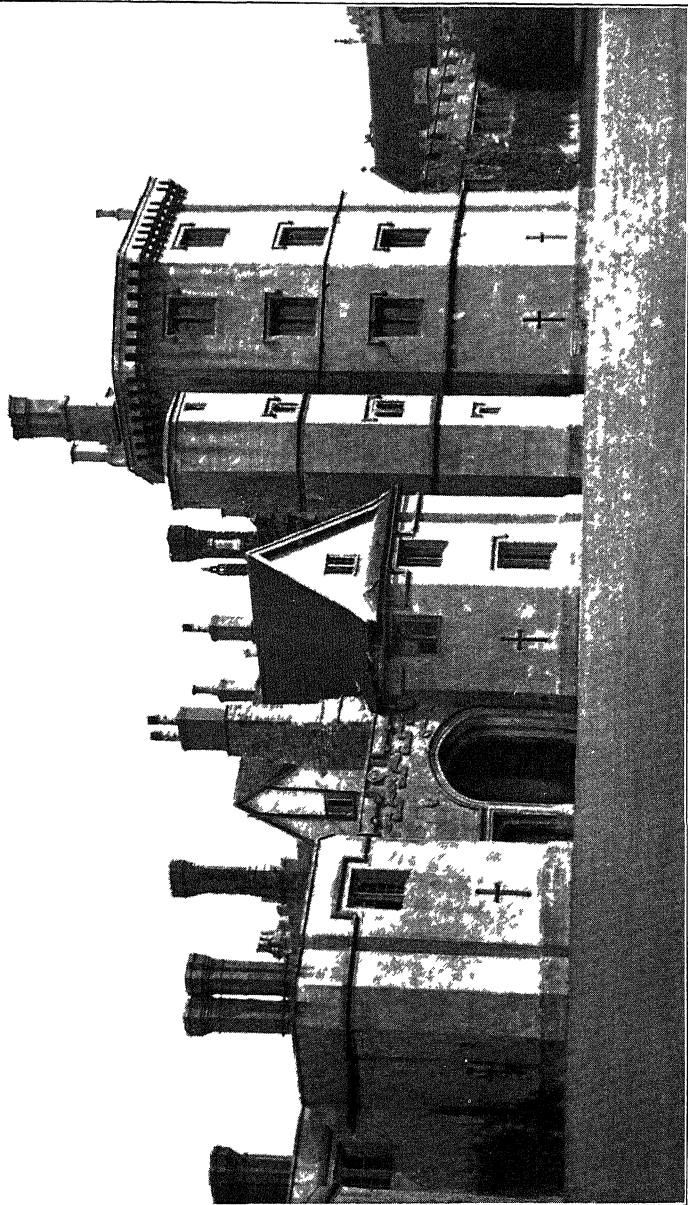
“I thought at one time, my dear Howard, that I should be able to make something of you—but I am afraid now that you will never be more than a respectable mediocrity.” He was quite right, and not only in regard to Latin verses. Having recognised that fact in time has stood me in good stead, for surely it is a far happier thing to be a “respectable mediocrity” than a genius of any kind.

I left Harrow with no regrets.

My mother offered me the choice of going to Cambridge, or starting at once to prepare for the Diplomatic examination.

As I had by that time settled on a Diplomatic career, I sacrificed Cambridge to the advantage of getting young into Diplomacy, and have regretted it ever since. Had I, however, spent the regulation three years at Cambridge, it would have delayed my start in life for that length of time, and perhaps altered the whole course of it. On the whole perhaps things turned out as well, or even better, than I had a right to expect.

But the lack of friends made at the University has certainly been a real loss throughout life, and I determined that any sons I might have should not suffer from it.



THORNBURY CASTLE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE—WEST FRONT, NEVER COMPLETED

CHAPTER II

PREPARATIONS FOR DIPLOMATIC SERVICE : FLORENCE, PARIS, DÜSSELDORF

(1881-1885)

AFTER leaving Harrow I went, with my mother and my second sister, Maud, who was still unmarried, to spend the winter in Florence and lay the foundations of an education in Italian.

My mother still clung to the idea that I might become an artist, in spite of the fact that I was obviously quite incompetent to draw a line correctly, and besides my Italian studies I was therefore to continue lessons in drawing and painting which, in accordance with her wishes, I had begun at Harrow. Although I very early realised that I was never going to do anything that would be satisfactory to myself, I nevertheless at that time, and for many years afterwards, passed many a pleasant hour daubing with paints and, at any rate, fixing in my mind the pleasant places which I was endeavouring to reproduce on paper. My realisation of my failure, however, was such that I cannot remember a single artistic effort of mine which I did not tear up within an hour or two after it was finished.

My mother, my sister and I lived the greater part of that winter in the Hotel Grande Bretagne at Florence, and I look back to it with the greatest pleasure. Our rooms looked out on the Arno and the Ponte Vecchio, and the old houses built right over the river on the other side. We had all the sun that there was ; it was a most comfortable hotel for those days, and old Signor Chiostrì, one of the proprietors, became, and remained till he died, an excellent friend.

I loved the cracking of the whips of the Florentine cabmen, with their little victorias and small and generally rather skinny horses ; and the flower-sellers who every morning under our windows began their cries : “ *Belle rose ! Belle rose ! bei mughetti ! bei mughetti !* ” as soon as spring was on its way. The Arno too, brown and noisy in time of flood, green, clear and placid at other times, always fascinated me, and the Ponte Vecchio was, and is still, a source of peculiar joy.

My Italian master was the Abate Fani, a great Dantista who, besides teaching me grammar, used to enliven the hours by reading and explaining passages out of the *Purgatorio*, the *Inferno* and the Sonnets ; for some reason or other, so far as I remember, we never touched the *Paradiso*, which I now regret. In any case, I am profoundly grateful to him for having given me, so early, some conception of the beauty of language and the grandeur of thought of the great Florentine. I wish that I had followed up those early lessons with more perseverance.

Other figures that remain particularly in my mind of the Florence of that time were Madame de Tchihatchef, an elderly English lady who had known my mother in earlier days in England, and gave us a warm welcome. She had, as her second husband, espoused an elderly Russian General, who had at one time held a command in the Turkish Army and whom she always called “ The Pasha.” He was supposed to be a man of immense erudition and scientific learning, but he seemed to be principally given up to the pleasures of the table, and paid very little attention to his fellow mortals. His English was peculiar ; he used invariably to ask his wife, when she came home from an afternoon drive : “ My dear, where have you been rrollink to this afternoon ? ” As Madame was extremely plump and round, this always delighted my youthful fancy, and she always used to receive the question with a chuckle.

Another prominent figure in my memories of that time was Mr. John Temple Leader, a very wealthy Englishman, to whom we had letters of introduction from an

old friend of his in England. As a young man he had been a prominent Liberal M.P. and a great friend of Lord Chancellor Brougham. He told me that on one occasion when he was staying with Lord Brougham at Brougham Hall, near Penrith, they had driven over together to see Highead Castle in Cumberland, which Lord Brougham had recently bought; the horses ran away, the carriage turned over and landed them in a ditch. Mr. Temple Leader, being of a Puckish disposition, suggested to Lord Brougham that they should write an account of the accident and send it to the papers, stating, however, that they had both been killed, in order to see what sort of obituary notices they would get in *The Times* and other papers. To this Lord Brougham cheerfully agreed. When, however, he read the obituary notices in the Press (*The Times* was the one paper which published no notice because the editor, knowing Lord Brougham's little ways, doubted the veracity of the announcement), he was so little pleased with it that he broke off relations with his impish friend and never again renewed them.

Mr. Temple Leader, when a young man, had an affair with a married lady in Italy, and she, I believe, left her husband and went back with him to England. This, so I was told by others, had naturally in those days wrecked his political career, and he left England and settled definitely in Florence where, after her husband's death, he married the lady of his affections. When I was in Florence they both lived in a large palazzo in the Piazza Pitti, opposite the Palazzo Pitti, and here, when I was alone in Florence, I used to dine every Sunday evening. There was always a large family party of Mrs. Leader's relations, and as they all spoke Italian and understood no English, it was excellent practice for me. If I remember right, conversation, which was loud and continuous, ran mainly on the charms of this or that star of the ballet then performing in Florence, and old Mr. Leader would make his peculiarly impish remarks to me in English, such as: "The interesting thing about conversation in this family

is that they all talk at once, and nobody seems to mind whether anybody is listening to him." This, I learnt afterwards, is rather an Italian habit; the fact of the matter being, as it has been explained to me by Italian friends, that they are so much quicker in the uptake than English people that they are able to talk and listen at the same time. I have noticed, however, that their knowledge of what passes in a conversation is often, as a result of this habit, not marked by excessive accuracy.

Mr. Temple Leader was busy for years in restoring the old Castle of Vincigliata, on a hill some miles out of Florence on the Fiesole side. He bought a considerable tract of very stony land all round it, which he planted with firs and cypresses, that have now grown to a respectable size. The reconstruction of the castle, which was completely ruined, was one of his great interests in life and has been, I believe, most scientifically carried out. It was his great joy to take us all up to Vincigliata to spend the day there, from time to time, and we were expected to go over the whole castle, from the top of the tower, round the battlements, into every room, ending in the cellars or dungeons. This became something of an act of penance, especially for my mother, but we sacrificed ourselves willingly because of the many kindnesses which Mr. Leader showered upon us. He also possessed a very fine Medici villa at Maiano, three-quarters of the way up to Fiesole, with several large *poderi* and an old quarry turned into a swimming pool, which was a great attraction on warm days in May or June. He had a considerable knowledge of the works of art scattered about in various churches and palazzi in Florence, and I owe to him the pleasure of a first acquaintance with a number of the most beautiful things there, with which his memory is always linked up in my mind. He contributed very largely to the building of the façade of the Duomo, and consequently, in recognition of his generosity, was placed as a Saint—I think, San Calisto—in one of the niches of the façade, which always caused him very lively amusement. He can still be seen there; his short, spare

figure, rather aquiline features and little pointed beard being not unworthy of an early Christian saint.

Another curious figure of the Florence of that period was old Lady Orford. Her husband, who was my mother's first cousin, had left her years before in Florence because it was said that he had found her being kissed by an Austrian officer at a Court ball at the Pitti Palace. However this may be, he certainly left her *plantée* in Florence and went back to England by himself. She, curiously enough, elected to spend the rest of her life in Florence, where she had a small villino, and used to receive, every Sunday night at twelve o'clock. She collected all the stray dogs she could find, and these sat on every sofa and chair in her drawing-room, so that, although the drawing-room was cleared up for these Sunday night receptions, the air was always perfumed, not only by the quantities of cigarettes which she and innumerable men friends used to consume, but also by the dogs, which, however, were on these occasions removed from the room. She was a very strange old lady, witty and very outspoken, with a great golden wig, which she had a habit of pushing on one side, leaving several straggling grey hairs showing underneath it on the other. I can see her still: with her lop-sided wig, interminable cigarettes following each other in a long cigarette-holder, surrounded by a group of men of all ages, wreathed in clouds of tobacco-smoke, and keeping them all amused in two or three languages at the same time.

When we first went there, my mother called upon her, not at her Bohemian Sunday night reception, but at a respectable hour, and she, poor lady, was extraordinarily pleased that any relation of her husband, by whose family she had been neglected for years, should come to see her.

She therefore took me to her heart, and I saw her from time to time, apart from the receptions, and got to have a real affection for her. Occasionally, however, she somewhat shocked my middle-Victorian sense of

propriety in those days, by her plainness of speech. On one occasion, when my mother and I went down to Naples, she gave us letters to her two daughters who had married Neopolitans of high degree. On my return, I remember, she asked whether I didn't think that they were both the image of Orford. I said I did not know him, and could not therefore answer. "That's a pity," she said, "because, you know, he used to pretend they weren't his, which was of course grossly untrue." I assured her that, in any case, I had no doubt of their legitimacy, but I was nevertheless shocked that she should mention such delicate matters in my presence.

The other family in Florence with which I established a long and lasting intimacy, which indeed has continued up to this day, was that of the Placcis, who lived at 7, via Alfieri. They consisted of old Madame Placci, who was a Mexican by birth, her two sons, Gennaro and Carlo, and one sister, Addy. Two other sisters were married, one in Paris and the other to a Mexican Imperialist who had to leave his country after the death of the Emperor Maximilian, and had then established himself in business in Liverpool. The youngest son, Carlo, being more or less of my age, was my particular friend and has always remained so. An extraordinarily gifted man, a fine pianist with a profound knowledge of music, speaking French and English as fluently and correctly as his own language, humorous with a humour that was rather Spanish than Italian, and witty with a wit that was truly Tuscan, gifted with an extraordinary power of mimicry that was almost equal to that of Miss Ruth Draper, he had an insatiable thirst for political information, and in course of time got to know leading politicians in France, Italy, England and Germany. He was equally at home with such men and women as Lord Balfour and Mrs. Asquith in England, with Prince Bülow and Frau Cosima Wagner in Germany, with Delcassé, Marshal Lyautey and Barriée, Paul Bourget, Maurice Barrès, and many other writers and musicians also in Paris, and with Dona Laura Minghetti and Sidney

Sonnino in Rome. He was on particularly intimate terms with Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannstahl.

Wherever any big political business was on—a Conference of any kind or a meeting of Foreign Secretaries at a watering-place—Carlo Placci was sure to be there, and was invited everywhere, amusing everybody and sucking political honey from every flower, not with the object of making any particular use of it, but simply because that sort of honey was sweet to him. One of his famous old lady friends in Paris used to call him “*mon petit cosmopolisson*,” and the name stuck. Another less kind nickname given to him by his mother, who adored him, was “*Il Ministro degli Affari Inutili*.” As a young man his health was very precarious and his figure spare. He had a singular resemblance to Savonarola, which gave a peculiar quality to his jests and quips. With all this he was never spoilt, was one of the best friends anyone could wish to have, and was always ready to add to the gaiety of young and old wherever he was. He may not, with all his talents, have created anything definite but, looking back upon our past relations, I cannot but think that those who, like Carlo Placci, can help to make this world, even for a short time for their friends, a place of smiles and laughter, have helped definitely to make it a better place.

I spent the whole of the winter and spring of 1880–81 at Florence, then passed on to Düsseldorf in order to improve my German. My mother had taken a room for me there in the house of an artist, Herr Carl Wagner, whose wife knew English and gave me excellent instruction in German. Unfortunately, perhaps, there were two or three English boys also in the house, and one Frenchman. The young Englishmen naturally distracted my attention from German, but as at the desire of my mother I spent many hours a day in Herr Wagner's studio, talking German with him all the time, I made pretty rapid progress.

Herr Wagner was painting an heroic picture of enormous size, in the best Düsseldorf manner. It represented

Bismarck dictating the terms of Peace after the War of 1870, to M. Thiers and M. Jules Favre. What happened to the picture I don't know, but I can see it still before my mind's eye as if I had just come out of the studio—in fact, it is impressed on my memory as are hardly any of the greatest works of art. Bismarck, gigantic, fierce, overpowering, standing up in front of the table, pointing at a map of the Franco-German frontier, with a gesture of tremendous vigour, dressed in the dark blue uniform of a Prussian officer, with no decoration but the Iron Cross. Poor M. Thiers, sitting crushed and utterly despondent, like Humpty-Dumpty on a *chaise percée*, and Jules Favre, starting up from his seat, with his white hair, as it were, standing on end in fear. This masterpiece had taken Herr Wagner years to bring to the point where it was when I had the good fortune to see it. It remains impressed on my mind, not so much on account of its merits as a work of art as because it was so obviously the conception of a quite kindly German of that time, of what should be the attitude of a German hero to a defeated foe. It contained a lesson I have not forgotten. Frau Wagner was always urging him to complete it, but there seemed to be insuperable difficulties, and after half an hour or so he used to sigh, lay his brushes aside and say to me that we should have a game of cards. On one occasion a terrible thing happened. Frau Wagner who, according to strict German etiquette, had no right to penetrate into the studio, suddenly came in and found us. It was in vain that we hid the cards under the table, and pretended to be very occupied in looking at some drawings of mine. The row was terrific, and poor Herr Wagner, who was really a mild man, metaphorically slunk away with his tail between his legs, so to speak. But the scene afforded me infinite enjoyment.

After a short holiday I went to study French in Paris, in the house of a French Protestant clergyman, M. Edmond Stapfer, who lived with his wife in an old house *entre cour et jardin* in the rue St. Ferdinand, near the Parc Monceau. Here my life was not particularly varied. Monsieur and

Madame Stapfer were both kindly and liberal-minded people, he taught French remarkably well, but never encouraged my studying French literature, nor, I may say, did he ever touch on religious subjects, for which I was grateful.

The two figures that remain principally in my memory at that time were those of Lord Lyons, our Ambassador in Paris, and of my cousin, Alan Herbert, the brother of my brother-in-law, Carnarvon, who was a doctor, lived in a little comfortable flat as an old bachelor, and looked after a Children's Hospital that was run entirely by Sir Richard Wallace, the owner of the Wallace Collection.

There never was a kinder man than Alan Herbert. He was essentially English in his thoughts and feelings, but his long hair and rather unkempt beard, his seedy frock-coat with the rosette of the Legion of Honour always stuck in the buttonhole, and even his manner of speech—when speaking English, not French—would have made anybody who didn't know him believe at first sight that he was a Frenchman. His habits of life had become completely French, and it was always a special joy to me to go and dine with him, which I used to do frequently, on account of the excellence of the *cuisine bourgeoise* and of the *vin rouge* which was always supplied in liberal quantities. As a schoolboy, whenever my mother and I went to Paris, he always brought me large boxes of chocolates and then generally prescribed the necessary pills afterwards, both with the same delightful and friendly smile.

He used to tell me most interesting stories of the siege of Paris in 1870, which he had gone through, and of the days of the Commune. During the siege his cook had bought a white hen, intending to fatten it up so that her beloved M. le Docteur would have a good dinner once at least, instead of eating rats and other things which were then common. But the hen had become so attached to him and he to it, that it used to wander about in his dining-room, sit on the back of his chair and share his scraps of food. It was, I believe, the only hen that lived

through the siege of Paris and the days of the Commune. After those tragic days were over he gave Una, as the hen was called, to my sister Maud and me, and we treasured it carefully at Thornbury until it died of old age. It was stuffed as a curiosity and remained for years in our schoolroom.

The great figure in my mind, however, was that of Lord Lyons. He was by far the greatest figure among ambassadors of that date, and it was not without considerable trepidation that I went to see him, having been invited to do so because his mother, I think, was a cousin of my father. I had never seen anything so gorgeous as the interior of the British Embassy seemed to be; innumerable footmen with plush breeches and aiguillettes hanging from their shoulders. Lord Lyons himself, however, was the reverse of gorgeous. He was so extraordinarily shy that he never dared to look any of his footmen in the face, and when he was dining alone he used to try and remember their names by memorising the contours of the calves of their legs. How far he was successful in this I don't know.

He was extremely kind to me as a young man, and invited me occasionally to some of the big dinners at the Embassy. This was my first lesson in the proper manner of running these rather terrific functions. His cook was famous, his wines also, and the turnout of his horses and carriages. But I only really learnt to know something about the man himself from my Chief in Berlin, Sir Edward Malet, who had been his private secretary in Paris during the 1870 war, and whom Lord Lyons had left behind in charge of the Embassy when he himself followed the French Government to Bordeaux.

Malet had the most profound respect and affection for Lord Lyons, whom he looked upon as the model of everything that a diplomatist should be, and he often used to tell me little stories about him, for my benefit. One or two of these deserve perhaps to be rescued from oblivion.

During the American Civil War, when Lord Lyons

was British Minister at Washington, great difficulties of course arose between the British and American Governments over the question of contraband. On one occasion Lord Palmerston wrote a very violent dispatch to Lord Lyons, instructing him to make a communication in the same sense to the American Government. Lord Lyons, who fortunately had been able to secure the friendship of President Lincoln, instead of making the communication to Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, went straight to the President, showed him the dispatch which, he felt, would so aggravate the situation as to make it almost hopeless, and begged the President to give him some more or less friendly message which he could send on to the Foreign Office and, with the help of this, dissuade them from insisting upon the instructions to present this vigorous Note. The President immediately fell in with this suggestion, and the result was that the Note was never presented and the tension became very much less acute.¹

I remember another delightful story that Malet told me about Lord Lyons. President Lincoln once asked him to go down and see him at the Front, somewhere in Virginia, possibly at the time of what is called "The Battle of the Wilderness." They stayed at a little country shanty together and, in the early morning, Lord Lyons went out into what in houses in the Southern States is called the "piazza" and in South Africa would be called the "stoep," and there found the President busy polishing his boots. Lord Lyons, who was a stickler for etiquette, held up his hands in horror, and said: "Mr. President, do you think it right that the President of the United States should polish his own boots?" Lincoln looked at him, with his curious humorous twinkle in his eyes, and said: "Mr. Minister, if he doesn't polish his own boots, whose boots, in the name of all that's holy, should he polish?"

¹ My recollection is that Malet told me that the letter or note in question came from Lord Palmerston. Lord Russell was, however, Foreign Secretary at that time, and it must therefore have been signed by him—Lord Palmerston was of course Prime Minister.

One more Lyons story, told by Malet, I will give. When, in 1870, the French Government left Paris for Bordeaux, naturally Lyons also left and took Malet with him on the journey, sending him back to Paris afterwards. They spent the night at some small provincial town on the way and in the morning, having some time to spare, went out for a walk. Some zealous gendarmes, hearing them speak English, arrested them both as German spies and got police to march them through the streets to the local prison, absolutely refusing to believe that their papers were correct. When the head of the prison saw the papers and realised who they were, he was, of course, profuse in his apologies, but nevertheless, the British Ambassador and his Secretary had been arrested as spies by an over zealous gendarme, and marched through the streets amidst the hooting of crowds with police on either side of them, in order to be lodged in jail. Lord Lyons, instead of making trouble about the indignities offered to him and reporting the matter home, not only accepted, in the friendliest way, the apologies of the master of the prison, but, as they left, he made Malet promise that he would never say a word about this to anybody. He then impressed on his mind this lesson : that it is the business of a diplomat, wherever he is, to avoid unpleasant incidents. If a diplomat unfortunately becomes the centre of an incident of this kind, it is probably largely his fault and he had best keep quiet about it.

There was nothing striking or brilliant about Lord Lyons, either in his conversation or in his appearance. Short, stout, with a round face, plump hands and mutton-chop whiskers, he was the ideal of a kindly, amiable John Bull. As to his conversation, I doubt if one single witty remark of his has ever been handed down, amongst his staff or in his family circle. He seemed to be, outwardly, at any rate, just a typical, kindly, commonplace old bachelor. To what, then, can we attribute his extraordinary success in diplomacy and the reputation which he had of being head and shoulders above every other ambassador of his time ?

Many years after my sojourn in Paris, I came across a reference to a letter by Mr. John Quincy Adams, in an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* for January, 1930, entitled "Small Talk of a Great Affair." Writing of Sir Charles Bagot's success as British Minister in the United States from 1815 to 1819, and of his having succeeded in persuading the United States Government of the time to accept the famous Rush-Bagot Treaty, which prohibited the maintenance of armed forces on the great lakes between the United States and Canada, and is probably the first, and, unquestionably, up to date, the most successful Disarmament Treaty ever entered into, Mr. John Quincy Adams declared himself, justly, puzzled about this success, because Sir Charles "had neither great intellectual powers nor profound learning yet he made himself universally acceptable." Mr. Adams reached the truly Adamsian and paradoxical conclusion that Sir Charles's success was due to the mediocrity of his talents and that, perhaps, second-rate men make the best diplomatists. Since reading this, I have often wondered if Mr. Adams's conclusion, though apparently paradoxical, was not really the true one.

But there was, of course, more than this. Lord Lyons was, indeed, the exact opposite of Charles II and his epitaph might have been written thus :

Here lies a great Ambassador
Whose word each man relies on ;
Though he never said a witty thing
He always did a wise one.

He was without prejudices, patient and very courteous, and endowed with what Americans call sound horse sense to an extraordinary degree. These were the qualities together with what, to the brilliant of the world, might seem mediocrity, gave him such an outstanding position among diplomatists of his day.

I learnt quite as much French from going frequently to the theatre as from my grammatical studies. My favourite theatres at that time were, of course, the

Français, where the great Mounet-Sully was the principal star for tragedy, and Got was marvellous for comedy ; the Porte St-Martin, which was then under the management of Sarah Bernhardt, where, for the only time in my life, I think, I wept salt tears in a theatre over the death of Froufrou ; the Odéon, where I used to enjoy the plays of Molière, which have always remained a delight, and the Palais Royal, with one or two extraordinarily funny actors, whose names I now forget. These, and the Sunday afternoon symphony concerts, were my principal recreation, apart from long walks in and around Paris, and visits to the Louvre, the Musée de Cluny, etc. It was in the Sainte-Chapelle that I first learnt really to enjoy the beauties of French fourteenth century stained glass. The Sainte-Chapelle is, to me, still one of the most enchanting things in Paris.

At the end of the winter I returned again to my friends, the Wagners at Düsseldorf, and then spent another winter in Florence, this time living under the wing of a beautiful white-haired Milanese lady, Signora Mida Galazzi, who, with her unmarried sister, kept a little flat in the via Montebello. Here, for months together, I talked nothing but Italian and this, with the excellent grammatical and literary groundwork furnished by the Abate Fani, to whom I continued to go for lessons, gave me a hold on the Italian language and an affection for it which I have never since lost.

During the course of that winter, 1883-4, I went out a great deal into Florentine Society. Of all the societies in the many towns that I have lived in, this was, perhaps, the most completely futile and lacking in any serious interest whatsoever. The members of it apparently lived only for their social amusements and their main themes of conversation were the last night's ball and to-morrow night's dinner party, the next week's ballet and last year's Opera. To add spice to the somewhat tasteless subjects there were always the amorous peccadilloes of their friends. On account of these there was an occasional duel, which made life rather more serious and exciting. The smart

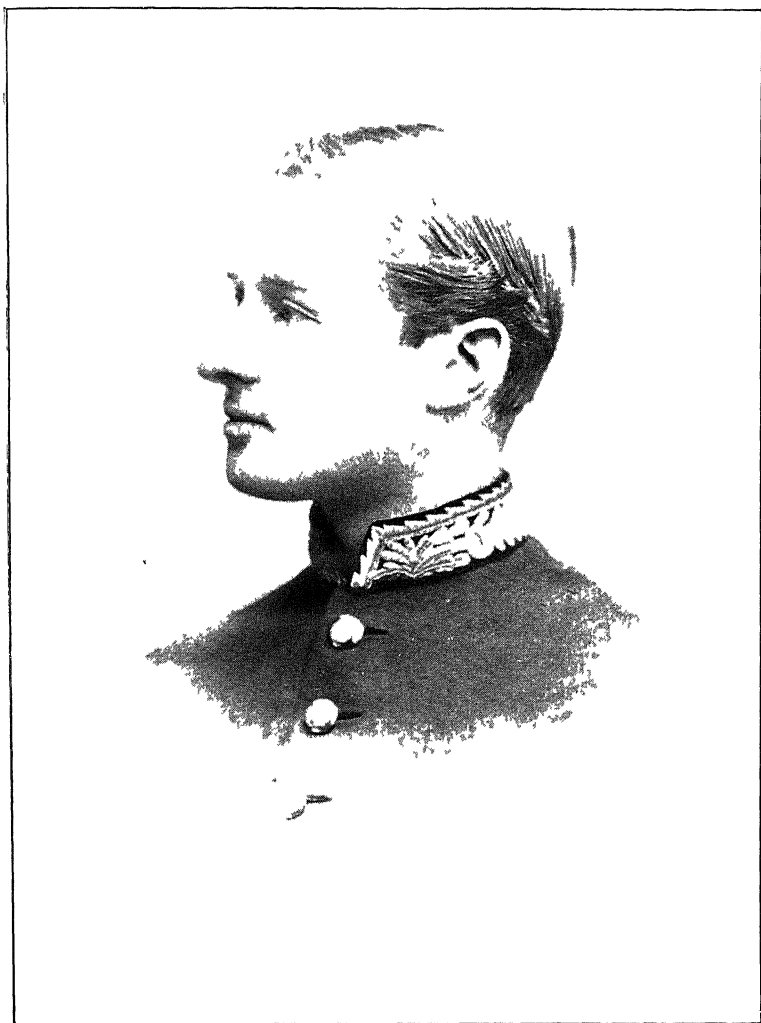
young Florentine of that day used, all through the weeks before Carnival ended, to dance up to five and six in the morning ; in fact the balls generally ended with a hot breakfast after dawn, the shutters opened and the light of day was let in on tired and perspiring faces. The smart young men then went to bed till lunch time, which was generally 12.30. They either lunched with friends—for a good many of them were simply *pique-assiettes*—or else at the Club in the via Tornabuoni. After coffee and a cigar they would come and stand in a group on the pavement outside the Club door and make loud remarks on the women who were passing ; so much was this the case that few decent girls cared to go up and down the via Tornabuoni at that hour. Looking back upon that season in Florence I am inclined to think that it was a very useful lesson to me, for I have ever since had a real distaste for what might be called Society life.

After my second stay in Florence, I started regular work in London with Mr. Scoones, who was, at that time, the great crammer for the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Service Examinations, as well as other branches of the Civil Service. All the time I had been abroad I had been reading and making notes of books which he had previously recommended to me, in addition to learning languages, and the plan was that I should spend a year at his establishment before the Examination, which I intended to take as soon as possible after my twenty-first birthday.

During this year I lived in a house in Half Moon Street, kept by a former butler of my father's who had married a lady's maid of my mother. All my brothers had lodged with them before, and they naturally took the greatest care to make me comfortable in every way. An old Cambridge friend of my brother's, George Macan, who had been in the Cambridge and Harrow Cricket teams, lodged there too, and we used to have our breakfast together and share a sitting room, which made things very pleasant for me.

This year was one of hard study and little relaxation,

except when I went up to Greystoke for a short holiday and shooting in the summer and at Christmas. The Examination took place, if I remember right, at the end of February or the beginning of March '85, and I went down immediately afterwards to stay with my sister and her husband, Carnarvon, at Pixton, near Dulverton. Here I spent most of my time fishing in the Exe and the Barle, and it was one cold morning when I was wading in the Barle, as usual without waders, that a boy came down from the house with a telegram for me, informing me that I was one of the four lucky ones who had passed the examination. My marks, if I am not mistaken, were "Fair average" in all subjects with the exception of précis writing, in which I was at the top. I suppose that this indicated that I had a rather exceptional gift for picking out the pith and marrow of any diplomatic paper and I imagine that this stood me in good stead in later years. I never expected to pass my first examination but, having done so, it all seemed, like nearly everything that has happened to me in life, to be a part of the natural order of things.



ESME HOWARD AS ATTACHÉ, 1885

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN OFFICE. VICEREGAL LODGE, DUBLIN.
DIPLOMATIC SERVICE: ROME, BERLIN. RETIREMENT

(1885-1890)

I JOINED the Foreign Office immediately after receiving the news giving the result of the examination.

Lord Granville was Secretary of State, but I don't think that I ever saw him in the Foreign Office. Sir Julian Pauncefote, afterwards Lord Pauncefote, was then Permanent Under Secretary, and being an old friend of Carnarvon, under whom he had served at the Colonial Office, he was always very friendly to me. The other man at the Foreign Office of that time I particularly remember was Cecil Spring Rice, who, as a boy at Eton and later, when he was at Oxford, used to spend his holidays with his family at Old Church, on Ullswater.

Springy, as we always called him, was then précis writer to the Secretary of State and was a general favourite. His witty sayings and sharp repartees were even then handed about in the Foreign Office as the sayings of some regular professional wit were handed about in society. His principal misfortune was that he couldn't help making rather biting repartees which, though they amused others, did not always make him popular with the victims. He was a delightful letter writer and a most charming companion, besides being a man of great literary gifts. Do we not owe to him, amongst other poems, the National hymn which is now always sung on great occasions in Westminster Abbey: "I vow to Thee my country"? I always had a feeling of great admiration and respect for him, although, as we were never at the same post and rarely met in after life, I cannot lay claim to any intimate

friendship. Shortly after leaving the Embassy in Washington, where he had served as Ambassador with the greatest distinction from 1913 to 1918, all through the most difficult years of the World War, he died suddenly at Ottawa, without seeing again his country, which he so deeply loved. It was, therefore, a peculiar satisfaction to me that I was instrumental, in 1929, after I myself had left the Washington Embassy, in collecting money to put up to him a memorial of a kind which he would certainly have dearly loved. This is a stone bridge, built in the old local Cumbrian style, over Aira Beck, just below Aira Force, in Gowbarrow Park on Ullswater—which used to belong to my father and, I am glad to say, now belongs to the National Trust, so that it is safe for the public. I am sure that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to feel that his memorial was of service to others, to enable them to enjoy better an object which enhances the beauty of a spot he greatly loved. This bridge was opened to the public on the 10th of August, 1932, by Lord Grey of Fallodon, who made a moving speech about our mutual friend "Springy." The day was a gorgeous one, and afterwards, Edward Grey, as we always preferred to call him, standing in front of Lyulph's Tower, where he was staying with me, said to me :

"I can see very little of the scene in front of me, but I feel, like the disciples on the Mount of the Transfiguration, that I ought to say 'Lord, it is good for us to be here'."

On joining the Foreign Office, I was put into the Western Department, where the work of the younger men at that time consisted of ciphering and deciphering telegrams and copying endless dispatches and memoranda in longhand. This was occasionally enlivened by the strange doings of some of our superiors and, particularly, of the Head of our Department who, though kindly, was a pompous and somewhat ignorant gentleman. On one occasion he came into the room where about six of us were working, and said, in his pompous way :

"I have heard, of course, of Timothy Titus and of the

Emperor Titus, but can anyone here present inform me who was Titus O-â-tes? "

During the short time that I spent at work in the Foreign Office, I noticed that, in those days at any rate, amongst the younger members there were continual epidemics of righteous indignation against the misdeeds of this or that Foreign Power, at that time principally against Russia. Russia was considered the arch enemy and the arch fiend who was intriguing all over the world against Great Britain, primarily, of course, with the object of the acquisition of India. Just at this time, in the spring of '85 there occurred what was then known as the Penjdeh incident, which created enormous excitement throughout the country and particularly, of course, in the Foreign Office and the India Office where, for some time, it was really believed that it might lead to war. I don't suppose that one man out of a million to-day, who is under seventy years of age, will have heard of it, and, therefore, it is hardly necessary to give any detailed account of it here. But I do remember that the pacifically-minded Secretary of State, Lord Granville, was accused by all the more frenzied youth of the Office, including, I suppose, myself, of having sacrificed British interest and British prestige, without warrant, on the altar of Peace. I even remember a cartoon drawn by my friend Springy (Cecil Spring Rice) which he gave me and which I have unfortunately lost, depicting Lord Granville feeding the British Lion with hay, under which was written :

And then he spake as he chewed the unwonted food
It may be wholesome but it is not good.

Nobody nowadays, I imagine, would indict Lord Granville for high treason for having come to an arrangement with Russia after the Penjdeh incident.

The Liberal Government fell in June, 1885, and a Conservative Government, under Lord Salisbury, took its place. My brother-in-law, Carnarvon, who had been twice Secretary for the Colonies under Beaconsfield, was offered and accepted the extremely difficult and, even at

that time, personally dangerous post of Viceroy of Ireland. The policy of the Liberal Government under the Viceroyalty of Lord Spencer who, like Carnarvon, was a member of the Cabinet—which was the usual custom in those days—had been marked by repressive and coercive measures. This was largely due to the assassination, in Phoenix Park, Dublin, on the day of Lord Spencer's inauguration as Viceroy, of Lord Frederick Cavendish, M.P., the son of the Duke of Devonshire, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and of Mr. Burke, Permanent Under Secretary for Ireland, who, of course, was resident in Dublin.

On more than one occasion, I heard Sir Edward Jenkinson, who was head of the Secret Police at that time and for some time later, describe what occurred on that fatal morning, as he stood at the drawing-room window of the Viceregal Lodge in Dublin and looked out across the lawn and the sunk fence that separated the grounds from the Phoenix Park. He used to tell us how he and one other member of Lord Spencer's staff were standing at that window, after the Viceregal party had returned from the inaugural ceremony, when they saw two men in top hats and frock coats walking along beside the main road which runs through the Park about 250 or 300 yards from the Viceregal Lodge. Suddenly an Irish side-car drove up, four men jumped off, there was a scuffle between them and the two men who had been noticed before; these two fell to the ground, apparently lifeless, and the four men jumped up again on the car and drove off. Sir Edward and the friend who was with him opened the great French window of the drawing-room and rushed out, jumping over the sunk fence, to find, to their horror, the two lifeless bodies of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, who were returning home on foot to their respective houses in the Phoenix Park.

The assassins never intended to kill Lord Frederick, but he fell on that fatal occasion because he happened to be walking with Mr. Burke against whom they had a special grudge.

The feeling caused in England by this double assassination was indescribable and measures of coercion and repression were asked for on all hands. It was a most unfortunate beginning for the Liberal Government, but as long as Lord Spencer remained in office it was impossible to make any change in this respect, and he had always to go about protected by police and armed detectives, even when out hunting, as had also some of the Resident Magistrates in certain of the more disturbed areas. During all that period the feeling of insecurity in the disturbed areas was great and some landlords described it to me later as being almost like a state of war.

These were, then, the circumstances in which Carnarvon entered upon his duties as Viceroy. With the full consent of Lord Salisbury and the Cabinet he at once decided to do without any special protection when he went abroad, and indeed the whole of the rigour of police surveillance was relaxed during his term of office. This was hailed at the time in Ireland as a sign of better times and there were many who thought that it might be possible for some compromise or agreement to be come to between the Government and the Irish Party, under Parnell, which then practically held the balance in the House of Commons.

It may well be imagined with what zest and excitement, as a young man of twenty-one, I accepted Carnarvon's offer to go to Dublin with him as Assistant Private Secretary, if this could be arranged with the Foreign Office. It was arranged, and it was with high anticipations of much more interesting work, with the prospect of, possibly, considerable distraction and adventure, that I left Euston Station to catch the night boat at Holyhead.

I remember that, on the bookstall at Euston, I picked up a little paper bound book called *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, just out, by a certain Robert Louis Stevenson, whom I had, till then, not heard of. This so fascinated me that I couldn't drop it and went on reading it both in the train and on the boat until it was finished. That was my first introduction to the great R.L.S., who, since then, has remained one of my favourite authors; one,

indeed of the very few, some of whose books I have read twice or even three times.

Kidnapped has always been a particular favourite of mine, with its delightful psychological picture of the Scotch lowlander in David Balfour, and the highlander in Alan Breck ; types, as it has always seemed to me, of their respective nationalities. Indeed it was the recognition of these types in *Kidnapped* that afterwards caused me to make a list for myself of books which, so far as I could see, particularly represented different nationalities.

England, curiously enough, seems to be more represented by *Tristram Shandy* than any other book that I know ; Spain, of course, by *Don Quixote* ; Germany by *Wilhelm Meister* ; Russia by *The Brothers Karamazov*, and the United States by Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Both of these in their inimitable way, give a picture of the youthful and, to a great extent, still pioneer spirit of that extraordinary country, which is, as yet, far too little understood on this side the Atlantic. As regards France and Italy, I have never yet come across the book that I wanted for my library of representative books. Sweden might, perhaps, be represented by Selma Lagerlöf's *Gösta Berling*, but of this I don't feel sure. In any case, it is an amusing game, trying to discover the books one thinks worthy to be placed on this list, and one which I can confidently recommend to those who not only enjoy the literature of other countries but also enjoy studying their characteristics.

We were all, naturally, very anxious as to how Carnarvon's first Reception and the Inauguration in Dublin would go off ; we trembled at the thought of some disaster like that at the inauguration of his predecessor. But everything went off very happily and, indeed, he was received with extraordinary acclamation.

It was my duty, as Assistant Private Secretary, to answer and file all letters of no importance. This was all done in longhand and I frequently left on the floor beside my writing table, which I found was the habit of the Viceregal Lodge, perhaps twenty or thirty letters a

morning : generally letters of thanks for congratulations and good wishes and, occasionally, for poetical effusions of the strangest kind. I remember particularly one verse of a long poem, in return for which I was told to send a small donation. It ended with a verse describing Ireland's exultation :

From Dublin to Dungarvan
Her Pharoahan day
Has passed away
Her Moses is Carnarvon.

Another letter caused me terrible perturbation and anxiety. It was written from Lambeth Palace and was signed, if I remember right, "Edward Cantuar." How it came into my hands I don't know, except that it only required an acknowledgment. I duly acknowledged it to the writer, whom I believed to be the Chaplain of the Archbishop of Canterbury and, in consequence, addressed as "The Rev. Edward Cantuar." It was not till some time after that I discovered the enormity of my *gaffe* and, as neither the heavens had fallen nor the earth's foundations fled, I hoped that it might have been forgotten and that it was unnecessary for me to confess this serious offence. I consulted my cousin, Camilla Wallop, who was staying in the house and who was a year or two older than myself, but in whose judgment I had complete confidence, as to what I had best do. She advised me to write a little letter of excuse to the Archbishop, which I did and I hope that it may have given him a moment of merriment over his morning's coffee.

Life at the Viceregal Lodge was an extremely busy one, both officially and socially. There was something of the ceremonial of a Court ; all the Aides-de-Camp, the Controller of the Household and the members of the Staff wore for dinner their dark blue coats with gilded buttons engraved with a shamrock and the motto "*Quis separabit,*" and light blue poplin facings, which added, at any rate, to the colour of the scene. After dinner, the ladies, in accordance with the custom of the time, went out first

and, as they passed out of the door, they had to turn and make a low curtsy to the Viceroy, who acknowledged this with a courtly bow.

One ceremony I remember especially, which was that of investiture of some four Knights of St. Patrick. This, I believe, was generally done by the Viceroy in Dublin Castle, but on this occasion it was for some reason or other performed in one of the drawing-rooms of the Viceroyal Lodge, which seemed singularly inappropriate for such a ceremony.

I now only vaguely remember the details but it caused us all considerable amusement at the time. Carnarvon, dressed in a frock coat and with his Staff Aides-de-Camp in uniform about him, stood at one end of the room. At a given moment three loud knocks, struck as if with the pommel of a sword, were heard on the door of the room. The principal Aide-de-Camp then asked: "Who is without?" Ulster King-at-Arms, who was waiting outside, replied that Ulster was without with Knights waiting to come into the Presence. The Aide-de-Camp then said: "Advance Ulster, and introduce the Knights." Ulster, in his uniform and embroidered tabard of office, then entered, followed by four Knights about to be invested. One was very tall, another very short and fat, another very lame, and the fourth of ordinary dimensions. They all wore what appeared, to me, to be blue silk dressing gowns which, clearly, had not been made for them. The very tall knight's dressing gown reached only a short way below his knees, showing large black and white check trousers and shiny boots below; the very short and fat knight's dressing gown trailed on the ground, so that, in approaching the Viceroy, he had to hold it up like a lady who was going to curtsy to the Queen. The poor lame knight, having got down on to his knees, was unable to rise again and had to be pulled up by two Aides-de-Camp. The only one who went through the performance with anything like dignity was the knight of ordinary dimensions. It struck me that, if the Knights could not pay for their own dressing gowns, the Government

of Ireland might at least provide garments suitable for all sizes.

So far as I was concerned, the seven months at Dublin passed uneventfully enough. The work was always, more or less, of the same kind and the recreations agreeable. There was a hard ball racquet court in the grounds of the Viceregal Lodge, where I used to play with some of the Aides-de-Camp and, especially, with Sir William Hart Dyke, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, who had played hard ball racquets, or what I prefer to call real racquets, both for Harrow and his University, and had been Amateur Champion for England, if I am not mistaken. Although he must have been quite forty-five at that time, and I was only twenty-one, I shall never forget the way in which he could stand in the middle of the court, apparently without ever having to move, while he made me charge about, like a bull in a bull ring, until I was completely exhausted.

I used also to ride frequently in the Phoenix Park with Carnarvon's eldest son, Porchester (afterwards the Carnarvon of Tut-ank-amen fame) and I used to have lessons from the old coachman in driving a brake with a four-in-hand. Once or twice Porchester and I were invited to shoot woodcock, and on one occasion we went to Galway to fish for salmon. The river however was very low, as invariably happens when I go salmon fishing, and the salmon were unable to get over the weir which, if I remember right, was just above the town. They were lying practically piled one on top of the other in the short stretch of the river between the weir and the sea, and in full view of the bridge over the river. It was a tantalising sight, but, of course, any attempt to fish with a fly or, indeed, any other bait was hopeless in the state of the water. At last, one of the local authorities, who was looking after us, said: "I think we'll just try a blue fly," which meant two or three naked hooks, tied together and weighted with lead, which you dragged through the water until you caught one of the dozens of fish in the back, or the tail, or some other part of the body. This, of course,

was a totally illegal proceeding, carried out under the eyes of dozens of spectators watching us from the bridge, but I felt that its very illegality gave us special popularity with the crowd, and when we, each of us, caught the only fish we were allowed, our success was greeted with cheers. These were the things that, for an Englishman, added to the charm of living in Ireland in those days.

However uneventful my own life was, the political situation was very far from being so, but this book is not intended to be, in any sense of the word, a history of political events about which others, who have been more closely or more directly connected with them, have already written fully or may be expected to do so.

The Governments of Great Britain which were upset during the nineteenth century and up to 1886 by the Irish question were those of : Pitt, 1801 ; Peel, 1839 ; Peel, 1846 ; Derby, 1868 ; Gladstone, 1873 ; Gladstone again (really over Irish policy, though nominally over a minor Budget question) in 1885 ; Salisbury, in January, 1886, and Gladstone in July, 1886. This little list will show, perhaps better than anything else, to what an extent the Irish question dominated English politics all through the nineteenth century, ever since the establishment of the Union. This situation became more and more unbearable as the Irish National Party grew and, finally, held the balance between Conservatives and Liberals.

The Land question was also a running sore, as was, invariably, the misunderstanding by Protestant England of a nation which was fundamentally Roman Catholic, owing to which misunderstanding religion and politics became inextricably mixed up. The ignorance of English people in general with regard to Ireland was indeed incredible and was deplored by all those who had any direct connection with Irish administration. The Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, while agreeing with much that Carnarvon urged in favour of a policy of conciliation, nevertheless held that the "possible," from a Party point of view, was quite separate from the "advisable" for the future of Ireland. In other words, Ireland was

to continue to be, as it had been, the shuttlecock of Party politics.

Sir William Hart Dyke wrote from London, on the 6th November, to Lord Carnarvon that he thought that "Lord Salisbury was opposed and believed that the great mass of the Party in both houses would be opposed to any bold move," i.e. to giving satisfaction of some kind to Irish national aspirations for local autonomy. Sir William went on :

I have talked much to members of the Government and others the past few days, without expressing my own views beyond the declaration of my opinion as to the hazardous state of affairs. . . . I found the same hopeless indifference and ignorance in every quarter, plus an amount of prejudice which would drive John Bright wild with envy.

There, it is to be feared, we have the secret of the whole of the Irish tragedy, and it seems that the end is not yet.

The story of Carnarvon's agitated seven months' administration in Ireland is very well told in his Life called : *The Fourth Earl of Carnarvon*, written by Sir Arthur Hardinge, volume 3, page 160 onwards. Those who wish to do so, can read about it there. The story of the unfortunate controversy over the interview with Parnell is told there impartially and truly. Anybody who wishes to judge of the rights and wrongs of the matter will be able to come to his own conclusions, after reading that account. I do not wish to refer to it more nearly here, but there is no doubt in my mind that it greatly embittered the remaining years of his life for Carnarvon, and there is also no doubt in my mind that the extraordinary chivalry with which he acted in the matter has never been properly acknowledged either by his Party or by the public at large.

In this connection I may, perhaps, record something which Mr. Bryce said to me years afterwards : " If I was asked to name two men in public life in my time, about whom one could say that it was impossible that they should do anything mean or tricky either for personal or for political ends, they were Spencer and Carnarvon."

With regard to this period I will only refer to one minor incident, as showing how difficult it was for a Viceroy of good will to obtain, at that time, even a most useful and beneficent measure of assistance for some work in Ireland which had any sort of connection with the Catholic religion. During the summer of 1885, Carnarvon made, with my sister, a tour in Connemara, and was immensely struck with the great good that was being done in that part of the world by the so-called Industrial Schools, about which he wrote, in a memorandum :

They are entirely worked by the Roman Catholic clergy and nuns and are, consequently, pervaded by the strongest religious feeling ; and it is just that which makes them such as they are. They are not to be confounded or compared with schools of a similar designation in England, for they do not really deal with children of the criminal classes, though the children that are brought under their influence would, if left to their fate, fall into the ranks of the disaffected and often the criminal population.

In a letter to the Queen, describing his tour, he said :

The bright spots in the whole picture are the Industrial Schools which Lord Carnarvon has already mentioned. Nothing can be better and morally and politically wholesomer than their condition, etc.

In order to help these schools, which, he said in a letter to Cardinal Manning, seemed to him the very saving and regeneration of the poorest part of the Irish people, he asked for an increase of £7,000 on the Grant to the Industrial Schools of Ireland. It was only after a long and wearisome struggle with the Treasury that he carried his point. Lord Randolph Churchill wrote to him :

It is the first time that I can recollect that a Lord Lieutenant has been able to emancipate himself from Treasury shackles so as to translate generous promises into generous acts.

Looking back upon that short period of interim government in Ireland, before the real, definite struggle between Home Rule and Unionism began which devastated English politics up to 1914, it certainly seems to me that here were the cross-roads at which, with a little common

sense, with a little shedding of prejudice and inherited misunderstandings, the whole of that disastrous chapter in Irish history might well have been avoided. If the Conservative Cabinet of that time had only been willing to accept the proposal, urged upon it over and over again by Carnarvon, to set up a Joint Committee of both Houses, in order to examine into and make some proposal for the modification of the Constitutional position of Ireland, it is just possible that an agreed settlement might then have been arrived at. As it is, it has been a case of the Sibylline Books, and we cannot tell yet what price we may have to pay for the purchase of the last, which will contain permanent good-will between the two countries.

For my own part, I left Ireland when Carnarvon left after the General Election in January, 1886, a convinced believer in the necessity, if we were ever to have peace, of giving local autonomy to Ireland, which then went under the rather elastic name of Home Rule. In this faith I was educated by Sir Robert Hamilton, the extremely able Permanent Under Secretary for Ireland, who was, of course, resident in Dublin. He had been all through the period of coercion and the Crimes Act under Lord Spencer, and he saw, quite plainly, that England's only choice with regard to Ireland lay in the continuance of coercion which, he believed, the majority of English people would not, in the long run, support, or in meeting half way the *desiderata* of the Irish Nationalists. He saw that the continuance of a large Irish Nationalist Party at Westminster, holding the balance between the two great English historic parties, would shortly reduce our system of representative Government to a hopeless condition of chaos. In this, events have proved that he was entirely right and it seemed to me then and seems to me still, that this was the only common sense view to take of the matter.

A few days before Carnarvon left Dublin there were two functions : the first and last Levée and the first and last Drawing-room, which were held, as usual, in Dublin Castle. I remember the latter especially, on account of the bevy of really beautiful girls who were presented.

One of them was terribly shy and held up the whole line, because she would not go forward and make her curtsy, and as it was the custom in Ireland for debutantes at Drawing-rooms to receive a kiss from the Viceroy, Major King Harman, one of the Aides-de-Camp, who could put on a rich Irish brogue when he wished, encouraged her by saying in a loud stage whisper : " Get along wid ye. He won't bite ye," which convulsed us all, the Viceroy included.

After all the turmoil of the Election of January, 1886, in which the Liberals had a considerable majority over the Conservatives in Great Britain, while the Irish Nationalists, or Parnellites, enormously increased their majority in Ireland and so became, more than ever before, the deciding factor at Westminster, it is pleasant to be able to record that Carnarvon, when he left Dublin on the 28th January, left with a demonstration that was quite as cordial as the welcome that he had received on arrival. The streets were thronged with a great multitude, " bands played the National Anthem, whilst the bared heads and loud cheers of the spectators testified the strength and depth of the popular sympathy which he had won." He himself wrote at the end of it :

So ends the task which, when I accepted it, seemed to me so full of danger and so utterly impossible. The dangers which I anticipated have not confronted us ; the difficulties we have had to meet have been different from what I expected. What I have done has also been different from what I had planned to do. I return with feelings far apart from those with which I went . . . I may say now, as I have constantly said, like Sir James Astley, in the Civil Wars : " Lord, if I forget Thee, yet do Thou remember me."

Justice has never been done to Carnarvon's personality. This was, perhaps, owing to the fact that he was not one of those who strike the popular imagination. He was not tall, nor capable of vigorous expression and his extreme refinement possibly gave to those who did not know him well an impression of weakness which was increased by his short-sightedness and a thin voice in public speaking. But no one who knew him well would have been deceived

by these superficialities. He had, indeed, a strong will, to further anything that he believed was to the public good. He was deeply religious, with no trace of intolerance in his composition. He was a finished scholar and made a translation of the Odyssey not, as he said, because he believed anybody would read it, but because it gave him amusement and distraction in times of stress. Before he left Dublin he was made a D.C.L. of Trinity College and, in reply to the Rector's Latin speech of welcome, he answered, without notes, in the same tongue, in a speech which lasted nearly a quarter of an hour. How far this was prepared or not I cannot say, but he replied, I believe, with point, to certain remarks of the Rector's which gave those present the impression that it was an impromptu Latin oration. This, I suppose, had never been done before by any Viceroy, and it was remembered for years afterwards as an important event in the history of that historic College.

No one could be a more devoted husband and father than he was, or a more generous landlord, looking carefully into the needs and requirements of even his smallest tenants. He had been a wide traveller in his youth, like his father before him, and knew a good deal not only of the ordinary Western countries from personal experience, but also of Greece, Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor. After his retirement from political life, which closed with the Irish Viceroyalty, he visited, with my sister, all the great Dominions: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, which countries had been of the greatest interest to him. He had been twice Minister for the Colonies and had been mainly responsible for that great Charter of Canadian nationhood, the British North America Act, for the welding of the different Provinces into one political unit which was actually passed in 1867, after he had left office. The leading Colonial statesmen who visited England were always invited either to his London house or to Highclere. It was there that I met such important leaders of Colonial political thought as Sir John MacDonald of Canada; Sir Charles Gavan

Duffy, of Australia ; Sir Gordon Sprigg, of South Africa, and others. Constantly hearing about the development and the potential powers of outlying parts of the British Empire, naturally prepared me to take a far greater interest in those countries than was usual for young men at the time. It was not, however, until I had the good fortune to meet Cecil Rhodes in South Africa a few years later, that the development and maintenance of the British Empire became, for me, one of the most absorbing political questions and has remained so ever since.

Highclere was also a centre of literary society to an extent which, I should think, was very unusual in the large country houses of that day. I remember seeing there, on more than one occasion : Browning, Lecky, Froude, W. T. Stead, of the *Westminster Gazette*, and Meredith Townsend, editor of the *Spectator*, and many others.

Although, as I have already said, Carnarvon had plenty of the spirit of adventure, so far as travel was concerned, he was not keenly interested in sport. In his youth he used to shoot and hunt to a certain extent, like any country gentleman, but I never remember his doing so after his marriage with my sister in 1878, when I first got to know him. Almost the only outdoor exercise he used to take was to go out for regular rides of an hour or so with her in the park, or on the downs behind Highclere.

I have certainly preserved for him a feeling of the deepest gratitude for what he taught me ; of affection for his constant kindness and of the deepest respect for his qualities as a *Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*.

After a month or two more at the Foreign Office, at the beginning of 1886 I was sent to Rome as unpaid Attaché, a chrysalis condition which even those who had taken their examination were expected, in those days, to go through for two years.

I reached Rome just towards the end of the Carnival of 1886, into which I was suddenly launched, for I found a number of invitations to balls at the Embassies and big houses in Rome belonging to the White, or Quirinal, as opposed to the Black, or Vatican branch of Roman society.

These had been collected for me by kind Mrs. Cecilia Walpole, who was the widow of my mother's cousin, Henry Walpole, who had been blind from his birth. Cecilia's best quality was certainly not her beauty. Henry Walpole, who was the brother of Lord Orford, had a great deal of Walpole wit and it was said that when he married, he wrote to one of his friends :

They tell me my wife is as ugly as sin
But as I can't see her I don't care a pin.

The night after my arrival I went to a ball in an old Roman Palace which had all the atmosphere of the *haute Société* of Rome in those days. Endless suites of immensely lofty and nobly proportioned rooms, with silk hangings and innumerable pictures, the latter generally of second-rate quality, but with a certain decorative value, numbers of servants in gorgeous liveries and plenty of room for dancing after the absurdly crowded ballrooms of London. But, on the other hand, very much less supper and carefully rationed champagne, which was the subject of a good deal of criticism in diplomatic circles. These entertainments had, certainly, a *cachet* which was all their own.

Like many other things in Rome, this has entirely changed and I imagine that the young people nowadays rarely, if ever, have the opportunity of dancing in those magnificent suites of halls and salons which we used to frequent without thinking very much about it.

I came back from my first ball about three or four in the morning and was met by the servant of the Chancery, who had sat up for me to say there were fifteen telegrams waiting to be deciphered in the Chancery, which had come in since I went out to dinner. This seemed to be a bad beginning, but I started work at once. They were all repetitions of telegrams to the Foreign Office about the abduction of Prince Alexander of Bulgaria by the Russians, an incident which, as may well be imagined, caused immense excitement.

Prince Alexander, after the battle of Slivnitza, had

become a sort of hero in many Western countries. He had begun to be regarded with favour both by the anti-Ottoman Liberals of England, as the future Liberator of Christian Balkan peoples from the Turkish yoke, and by the Conservatives, on account of his unpopularity with the Russians, who looked upon him as a possible obstacle to their penetration in the Balkans and the ultimate acquisition of Constantinople and the Straits.

His forcible abduction was an extraordinary incident and, tired as I was, I went on deciphering, with zest, up to breakfast time, by which I had most of my telegrams ready for the Ambassador to read with his morning coffee. He must have been pleased for, hearing, presumably, that I had gone straight to my bath and breakfast, and that, meantime, more telegrams had come in, he came down into the Chancery, *en déshabillé*, after I had finished breakfast and helped me with the deciphering of the later telegrams.

This act of kindness to a new boy was very characteristic of Sir John Saville Lumley, afterwards Lord Saville of Rufford, who was my first Diplomatic Chief. He was, in every way, the typical regular diplomat of that day. An old bachelor, extremely sociable; enjoying the dispensing of hospitality to all and sundry, doing, on the whole, what was expected of him with considerable success, as long as too much was not expected of him; in fact, playing the part of the stage ambassador to perfection. He was a good looking man, not tall, with a fresh complexion, white curly hair and a white beard. He was still, though at that time getting on for seventy, an extremely active dancer. He was fond of painting and having been previously at Madrid had made copies of all the famous Velazquez pictures in the Prado Gallery. These decorated many of the rooms of the Embassy. The Embassy was, perhaps, unfortunate in having not only an artistic ambassador who hung his pictures on the walls, but in having previously had an artistic ambassadress, Lady Paget, who decorated the walls of one or two of the drawing-rooms with large mirrors, painted by herself,

with naked cupids and garlands of flowers. It was said in Roman Society that the naked cupids were portraits of her own children, who were grown up by the time I arrived at the Embassy. However this may be, Sir John, not from puritanical reasons, but because his taste in art did not coincide with that of Lady Paget, covered most of these mirrors with drapery, which, I believe, resulted in some slight bitterness between them.

The three members of the Chancery were all considerably older than I, being but a little under forty. There was William Nelthorpe Beauclerk, Frederick Adam and Sir Francis Denys. They none of them liked each other at all, and their little controversies, always stoked up by the peculiar and most entertainingly satirical observations of Beauclerk, afforded me continual amusement. I, fortunately, got along quite well with all of them and they were all, from the first start off, extremely friendly to the youngster that I was.

One curious little incident I remember, shortly after my arrival. One morning as we were all working in the Chancery, more or less peacefully, the door was suddenly flung open and the Chancery servant, his eyes starting out of his head with astonishment, announced: "*Sua Eminenza Il Cardinale Howard.*" The Cardinal marched in with all his six feet two of an ex-Guards officer very stately as always, and, as I went up to greet him, he saluted me on both cheeks, which completed the amazement of the other three occupants of the room. It was, of course, an unheard of thing for a Cardinal, in those days, to enter the portals of a White Embassy or Legation and he had, therefore, never been within its precincts before. But I certainly think that he enjoyed the impression his unexpected appearance produced on this occasion, quite as much as it embarrassed me.

Cardinal Howard was the son of Lord Edward Howard, younger brother of my grandfather. He was, at this time, I suppose, about fifty-five years of age and as tall and upright as he had been when an officer in the Guards. He was certainly the finest-looking ecclesiastic in Rome,

and it was worth going to some ceremony at St. Peter's, of which he was Archpriest, in order to see him officiate. As a young man, when he was still in the Guards, he used frequently to come to Greystoke, and my mother was fond of reminding him of one occasion when, coming home to lunch after a morning's shooting, and being very hungry, he helped himself generously to some meat. It happened to be a Friday and another Catholic cousin, also staying there, tactlessly and somewhat maliciously, no doubt, reminded him of the day. My mother never forgot the groan, which was the reverse of pious, with which he pushed the plate away from him, and there was something, I think, of kindly malice in her reminders of this incident.

My mother and he always remained very good friends and two or three times during the following summer, when I had to remain in Rome till September and she insisted on keeping me company, the Cardinal used to invite us out to luncheon at his great house at Frascati, of which he was Bishop. We used to cross the dry, hot and dusty Campagna about midday in the extremely smoky steam tram, so as to arrive at Frascati before one. There a great landau, with a couple of fine black horses—he was always very proud of his horses and the carriages and horses of all ecclesiastics in Rome were obliged to be black—met us at the station and drove us to the great portal of the Bishop's house. Here everything was dark and cool and very quiet. It was sparsely furnished in the usual ecclesiastical style of that time and, shortly after arrival, we used to go and sit down in the large dining-room, my mother and I and the Cardinal and his confessor, an old and very ascetic looking Jesuit, Padre Nanarini.

For the sake of Padre Nanarini the conversation was generally carried on in Italian. My mother's knowledge of Italian was quite good enough for everyday subjects, but when she began religious controversy with Padre Nanarini she was very soon out of her depth. I particularly remember one of these luncheons in that great dark room, when she endeavoured to point out, in her

best Italian, the disadvantages of a celibate clergy. This led to such flounderings and circumlocutions that at last the Cardinal and I could stand it no longer and much, I think, to the surprise of Padre Nanarini burst into rather unseemly but uncontrollable mirth.

After luncheon, my mother and I were allowed the usual siesta, and were then sent by ourselves for a drive in the great landau, along the beautiful road to Albano, which is quite as magnificent in midsummer as it is at any other season of the year. The Campagna below has taken on its Franciscan habit of brown, and far on the horizon can be seen the Mediterranean, gleaming in the sun; the shadows take on deep violet and indigo colours, and every now and again through the ilexes on the hill-sides the eye catches glimpses of emerald green, where there is running water or some spring and a little marshy land. Truly, at any season of the year the Campagna is, or was then, before it was covered with houses, small farms and suburban villas, one of the grandest, most beautiful and, with its Roman ruins, most inspiring scenes in the world. Whether for riding over or walking, I know no place than can be compared to it and, certainly, scarcely one which I love better.

As soon as the fat black horses were covered with a lather of white sweat, which was, generally, before we got to Castel Gandolfo and the Lake of Albano, we returned, had a cup of tea with the Cardinal and went back in the cool of the evening, in the horrible dusty tram, but well pleased, nevertheless, with our summer day at Frascati.

I used to see Cardinal Howard frequently, and he took a fatherly interest in my attempts to learn Russian from an old Russian Catholic priest, Padre Azemoff, who had taught him that language, which he was said to speak fluently. He was indeed, by all accounts, a remarkable linguist, and was fond of addressing pilgrims from many countries in their own tongue. Some years afterwards he was stricken by a sort of paralysis of the brain, which made it difficult for him to speak consecutively, and of this illness he died, having lost all power of speech, in

1892. I noticed that something was wrong, when he began first of all to forget his French, and then was unable to talk to his servants in Italian. He used to ask me, if I was at hand, to explain to them what he wanted, evidently under the impression that their lack of understanding was due to their stupidity. This gradual loss of mental power in one for whom I had a great affection was, I remember, very grievous to me, as I noticed after almost every visit I made to him a steady loss of the power of speech.

The work at the Embassy did not, fortunately, keep up to the standard that was set on the first night of my arrival and things very soon quieted down again to their normal condition. My work, as the scrub of the Embassy, was confined mainly to deciphering telegrams and copying dispatches and memoranda in longhand, but I also had a good deal of translating work thrown on to me, as being the member of the Chancery with the best knowledge of Italian. This became at times something of a burden, because my good old Chief would occasionally think that there were not enough dispatches going to the Foreign Office by the fortnightly messenger, and would mark some article in the *Popolo Romano* or the *Corriere della Sera*, or any newspaper he happened to have got hold of, to be sent home in original with a translation. My heart used to sink when I saw perhaps five or six of these marked papers lying on my table in the morning, but it was also flattering to my pride to feel that I was singled out for this mark of his confidence.

He was also rather fond of beginning his dispatches by saying that Signor Malvano, the Under Secretary at the Italian Foreign Office, had made to him some important communication. Sir John so rarely went to the Foreign Office that we wondered, in the Chancery, when Signor Malvano was able to take him thus into his confidence. We found out that they used to go off together, at an early hour in the morning, to bathe in the opal coloured waters of the sulphur springs at Acque Albule, and it was always my suspicion that Sir John, having inveigled Signor Malvano into accepting an invitation to drive to Acque

Albule with a breakfast after at the Embassy, would then duck the unfortunate Under Secretary until he disclosed some awful secret. These secrets did not, however, appear ever to disturb the equanimity of Her Majesty's Government.

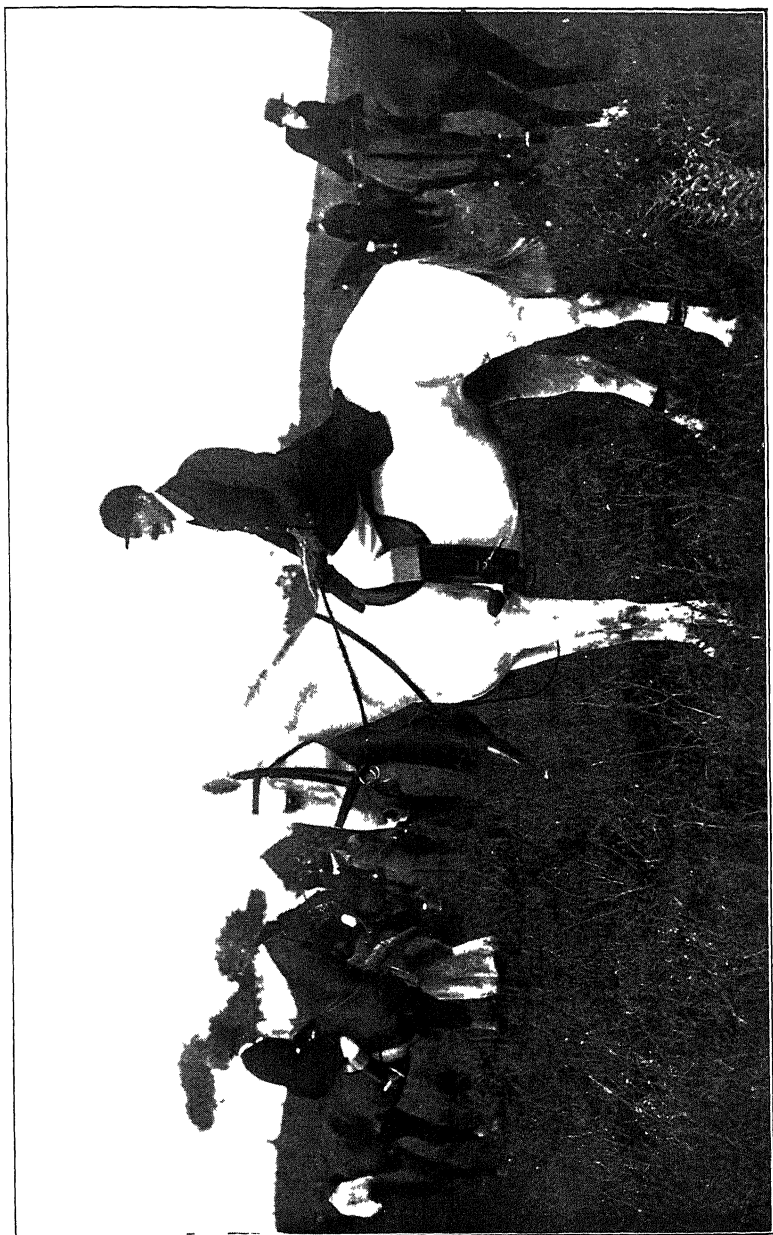
Sir John encouraged my riding and hunting in the Campagna and told me, almost immediately after my arrival, that he considered one man of the Embassy at least should join the Roman Hunt, and that, if I would do so, he would let me have two days a week free during the season and keep my horse in his stables. I at once jumped at this offer and immediately hired a horse for the remainder of the season. These days of hunting in the Campagna are certainly amongst my pleasantest recollections of the time. The Master then was Don Giulio Grazioli and he and his wife became my very good friends. I was thus enabled to make friends among certain members of Roman society whom I should not otherwise have met. But the man I specially remember in the hunting field that year was a very remarkable Englishman, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, who with his wife, Lady Anne, was spending the winter in Rome.

Wilfrid Blunt was a well known figure in English society and also in Egypt. Tall, dark and exceedingly handsome, he had been in the Diplomatic service in his youth and was said, with what truth I do not know, to have been the only Englishman who had killed a bull in the bull-ring at Madrid. He was a poet of no mean order and his sonnets, published by the Kelmscott Press, are, many of them, extremely beautiful. Immensely proud but at the same time a born revolutionary, he gave endless trouble to the British authorities in Egypt, by continually and actively taking up the cause of those who, like Arabi Pasha, were using every means in their power, even to the extent of open rebellion against the Khedive, to get the English out of Egypt. At one time he made such fiery and revolutionery speeches in Ireland that he was sent to prison for some months. This however rather damped his ardour because, though he did not mind the

discomforts of travel in the desert in Egypt or Arabia, he distinctly objected to those of an Irish prison. It was his particular joy to dress up as an Arab chief and to be considered as half an Arab, although I believe his knowledge of the language was not half as thorough as that of his wife, Lady Anne, who, by frequent travel in the East, had come to look almost like an Arab herself.

Owing to my acquaintance with Wilfrid Blunt and his wife, which rapidly ripened into friendship, I used to go and stay with them at their country house in Sussex, Crabbet Park. While the house had all the comforts of the time, there was a curious artificial effort to give it a look of wildness by leaving the drive up to the door unweeded and the lawns and shrubberies to grow absolutely as Nature willed. Both Wilfrid and Lady Anne were passionately fond of Arab horses and kept, indeed, the only stud of pure bred Arabs in England. Every year there was a great sale of Arabs at Crabbet, which numbers of people in London society, not only lovers of horseflesh, attended. It was really a cheery picnic rather than anything else, and Wilfrid Blunt used to provide his guests with a sumptuous luncheon at which he always harangued them in a little speech. In order to keep up his reputation as a revolutionary, with a profound contempt for all class differences—which he was far from feeling—he often began by saying: "Ladies and Gentlemen," and then, looking round him he would add, as an afterthought, "and Lords," which was always greeted with laughter and cheers.

There was, also, an institution of the early nineties called the Crabbet Club, to which I had the honour to belong. A certain number of young men, I forget how many, and one or two old ones, used to meet for a week-end in June under Wilfrid's hospitable roof, and he gave a prize for the champion lawn tennis player and for the best poem. On the Saturday evening the business of the club was first transacted, new members were elected and speeches were made, generally in a vein of pleasantry and satire, proposing and seconding the candidates; regretting



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absent friends, congratulating the President, Wilfrid Blunt, who sat at the head of the table, dressed in gorgeous silks, like an Arab sheikh, with an enormous turban. This always caused Mark Napier, who was the counsel whom Wilfrid Blunt had engaged to defend Arabi Pasha on his trial, to refer to Wilfrid as "the flower pot man."

We had among us many of the brilliant young men of that time; those who stood out most conspicuously were George Curzon, afterwards Lord Curzon of Kedleston, George Wyndham and his cousin Percy, Moncton Milnes, now Lord Crewe, the three Peels, William, George and Sydney, sons of the Speaker, Harry Cust, my own distant kinsmen and great friends Morpeth and his adventurous brother, Hubert Howard, Mark Napier, George Leveson-Gower, and old Godfrey Webb, who was a sort of society wit of the day. George Curzon, whom I used to meet in Cumberland, stands out particularly among all these in my memory. When I came up for the club at one Saturday evening dinner, being myself present, Mark Napier was given the task of proposing me. He did it more or less in these terms:

"I hardly know this fellow, Esme Howard, whom I have been told to propose, and it matters little to me whether one fool more or less joins this club, but there is one matter which may be of great importance to you all. It is that I have, in Westminster, a charming little house that I want to let."

With that he continued to describe, amidst loud laughter and in great detail, the charms of his house and ended by formally proposing me for the club. I was then told to get up and say what I could for myself.

I said, as far as I can remember, that I was overwhelmed by finding myself in the midst of such a company and being proposed as one to have the honour of joining such a galaxy of wit and beauty. Well knowing my own limitations, I would only throw myself upon the mercy of the company as a Respectable Mediocrity, and hope that I might be allowed to join their ranks and enjoy their society.

Upon this George Curzon jumped up and in a voice trembling with righteous indignation said :

“ I must really protest against this outrage, with all the vigour of which I am capable. We have had, hitherto, all sorts of people elected to the club, of whom, the less said, perhaps, the better. But we have never yet had one who laid claim to the title of a Respectable Mediocrity. A Mediocrity I might, perhaps, *à la rigueur*, have put up with, but a *respectable* one would be past endurance.”

In spite of this I was, however, elected and enjoyed the two or three Crabbet Club week-ends which I was able to attend to the uttermost.

On the Sunday afternoon the tennis competitions took place, amidst much chaff and uproarious applause for the victor, and in the evening the poems were read out and more speeches made. George Curzon's poems were unquestionably the outstanding ones, and when he declaimed them I always felt what a marvellous actor he would have made. One year the subject of the poem, which was always set by Wilfrid Blunt, was “ Sin.” George Curzon's poem described the sad degeneracy of an age in which the more flagrant forms of sin and political corruption, which flourished so beneficently in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were now, only too often, punished severely by hard-hearted judges and idiotic laws, and he concluded in a verse in which he hoped that we might again look forward to a sort of millennium in which it might be possible, freely to enjoy all the advantages of, as he put it “ frank, uncompromising and premeditated sin.” His declamation of that last line is something I can never forget. He of course obtained the prize, by universal acclamation.

One night, I remember, we went on listening to poems and to extempore speeches—that is to say, those of us, like myself, who did not speak and were in the minority—until long after the June sun rose and then, as it was very warm, we all went up to our rooms, stripped, threw bath towels round us and trooped down to swim in the lake,

returning for a hot breakfast in time for those who wished to catch an early train to London.

Such was the Crabbet Club. I have never seen any description of it in any book about those poor "Naughty Nineties" which were, I suppose, taking them all in all not much worse than any other decade of the nineteenth century, although people perhaps had already begun to rebel against the conventional goody-goodiness of the Middle Victorian period, which drove many things, in themselves not reprehensible, underground, where they flourished with even greater vigour.

One year Wilfrid Blunt invited me down to Crabbet for Derby Day, which it was his habit to attend in a brake with a four-in-hand of Arab horses, driven by himself. We arrived rather late at Epsom and, so far as I remember at this distance of time, his entrance to the course—which he wanted to cross in order to get to a point inside the ring which was always reserved for him—was blocked by the police because a race was shortly to be run. With his usual utter disregard of law, Wilfrid whipped up his horses and charged straight at the police who fortunately gave way. He tried to cross, but found that the usual opening on the other side was too compactly blocked by crowds even for him, and therefore swished his team round and started galloping up the course. For a few minutes we were the centre of all attraction, cheers, hoots and cat calls mingling in a strange symphony. The police however were, as usual, alive to the necessities of the moment and a little way farther up they cleared a space where there was an entrance on the inner side. This Wilfrid's quick eye detected and he again swished his team round to the left and galloped his horses triumphantly to the place reserved for him. I never heard that he got into any trouble for this little adventure which was singularly typical of him. That was the only time I have ever been to the Derby, for horse races have always bored me and I never went again in order not to destroy the happy memories of that particular Derby Day.

Wilfrid Blunt also remains very strongly impressed upon my mind in connection with those happy days of the Roman Hunt during the early spring of 1886. I can see him now after the day was over, with his hat off and his hair disordered by the wind, galloping over the Campagna like a madman, giving me a display of how Arab sheikhs yelled when they were in pursuit of gazelles over the Arabian desert. Like most strange and unconventional people, Wilfrid Blunt had a fascination for me, and it always rather amused me, in after years, to praise him to Sir Edward Grey, to whom he was anathema, because of the trouble he had caused in Egypt when Sir Edward was Under Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. It would indeed be difficult to imagine two men farther apart and, while Sir Edward had all my affection, admiration and respect, I must admit I always had more than a sneaking inclination towards men of unusual types like Wilfrid Blunt, whatever their faults may have been.

My two and a half years at Rome passed delightfully and uneventfully, and they had the effect of binding me definitely to Italy and especially to Rome. I spent two full summers there and learned to love Italy as much in the summer as at any other time of the year. My rooms in the Embassy were low, on the mezzanine floor, between the ground and the first floors; they faced almost due south and were, therefore, somewhat oppressive in the heat of the summer, but this I did not mind. In the early morning, about six-thirty, I used to go out riding into the Campagna and, in those days, I could get out into the open fields within ten minutes or a quarter of an hour from the Embassy gate. The air at that hour was always cool and almost invigorating; there was often dew on the grass, or rather on the burnt-up remains of grass and shrubs; and I was tempted to go out for considerable distances. I used to return about eight-thirty or nine, have my bath and breakfast, and be in the Chancery a little after ten. My meals I had with a senior secretary, Sir Brooke Boothby, who arrived shortly after I did, and proved a most delightful companion.

He also lived in the Embassy, on the ground floor rooms, below mine.

In the late afternoon before sunset we used generally to play lawn tennis, either in the Embassy garden or with friends, returning for a light supper and evening of reading, or else, particularly on warm evenings in May or June, sitting out on the sentries' walk of the old city wall, which formed the northern boundary of the Embassy garden, and listening to the three or four nightingales which used to nest regularly below the old cypresses and ilexes of the garden. The wall was a mass of banksia roses, jasmine and honeysuckle that fell in cascades all around, and the combination of the scent of their flowers, of the old historic wall of Hadrian, of the moonlight, when there was a moon, of the dark shadows of the cypress and ilex trees and the concerted singing of the nightingales, was one that has certainly never been equalled in all my experience of different countries.

Another recreation which I particularly enjoyed while in Rome, although I could not indulge in it very often, was going down to the Pontine Marshes for a night or two to shoot snipe, woodcock and a chance duck. I was accompanied by our head Chancery servant, Antonio, who possessed one of the curious sporting dogs that the Roman *Cacciatori* of that time loved to parade about the streets for three hundred and sixty days in the year in order to advertise their sporting habits. These dogs were, I am afraid, generally used for larks and other small birds, but Antonio's dog, which was a sort of cross between an ancient British sheep-dog and a pointer, would also, on occasion, retrieve a snipe.

In those days nearly the whole area of the Pontine Marshes and their sea coast—something, I believe, like forty or fifty miles in length, and perhaps fifteen to twenty miles across—belonged to the Duke of Sermoneta. The Duchess of Sermoneta, who was one of the great beauties of Rome, was a Miss Wilbraham and sister of Mrs. Kennedy, the wife of John Gordon Kennedy, the

Councillor of the Embassy. The Kennedys were most kind to me and through them I got to know the Sermonetas well, and was allowed by the Duke when I went down to shoot, to stay for a night or two in his large palazzo in the little town of Cisterna which was a sort of capital of the Marsh district.

I have seldom slept in a more ghostly place. It was almost devoid of furniture ; my bedroom, I remember, was about as large and as high as the largest salon of the Royal Academy ; there was in it an iron bedstead, a deal table and one chair ; the floor, of course, was of brick and the walls were whitewashed. There was also what used to be called a *scendi-letto*, or a minute rug on one side of the bed. The only light in this vast room was a candle in a small candlestick. I had no notion where my nearest neighbour was in the great house, or indeed whether there was one, though I believe there was a *guardiano* who slept somewhere. My youthful imagination was fired by stories of the Italian Middle Ages and, as the candle flickered in the draughts which floated into this large and unheated room on a winter night, my mind's eye peopled the place with ghosts of those who had probably had their eyes gouged out, or their fingernails extracted by some mediæval ancestor of the Duke. Antonio used to call me before dawn and I was always ready to start at the earliest possible hour in order to get away from the room thus haunted by my imagination.

After a very slight breakfast we drove out in a little *calèche* over the cobbled streets where the unfortunate fever-stricken population was already beginning to move. The first thing the workmen did in the early morning was to go to an *Osteria* and get a tot of some raw spirit to keep the fever off. Perhaps my memory exaggerates, but I do not remember to have seen anywhere such yellow, cadaverous, drawn faces as, in those days, in Cisterna. We would drive some distance through the mists of the morning ; gradually the sun rose and the sky became clear ; then the extraordinary wild beauty of the Pontine Marshes was made visible. This perhaps was more to

me than the three or four snipe and two or three woodcock we might by chance pick up.

The district called the Pontine Marshes was, in those days, not really all marshland by any means, but consisted also of great pastures in which large herds of the beautiful long-horned white cattle, which are still seen round Rome, used to feed, as well as herds of the smaller black buffaloes, which were used for drawing carts. The cheese made from their milk was and still is much appreciated. They were supposed to be, at times, rather dangerous, but they never attacked us. Once, on the other hand, a large herd of white cattle—perhaps two or three hundred—attracted by Antonio's dog, came suddenly galloping straight at us, like a squadron of cavalry. Antonio said: "Stand quite still and it will be all right." We stood like statues and when the beasts got within a hundred yards or less, they divided into two groups, to my great relief, and charged past at full gallop, on either side, as if they were at a review.

These pastures were cut up by deep canals, in which there was said to be numbers of fish. From time to time fishing expeditions were organised by the inhabitants and the method, I believe, was as follows: light nets were thrown across the canals at certain places and then, at some distance below, herds of buffaloes were driven in and made to wade or swim towards the nets, which, naturally, frightened the fish and drove them into the latter.

In addition to the pastures and intersecting canals there were also rushy lagoons, marshes and, on rather higher land, magnificent oak woods. To the east were the beautiful Volscian hills, with their most picturesque villages, Sermoneta, Cori and Norma. The whole surroundings, on a sparkling winter day, made up, as may be imagined, for any lack of sport. I do not remember ever having got more than two or three snipe or woodcock, but there was a sense of adventure about the whole thing, which gave it a zest that I have never experienced in the most carefully preserved pheasant shoot in England.

On the morning of our departure we had to start again before dawn in order to catch a train for Velletri and then Antonio used always to load his gun and tell me to load mine and, pointing mysteriously to the driver, would whisper "*Sgrassatori*." This means, being translated, that we might be relieved of extra fat, and was the word euphemistically used in those days for brigands. This, of course, never occurred, but it all added to the joys of the expedition.

As the scrub of the Embassy, I naturally did not come much into contact with the great and eminent. Once, however, when the British Fleet visited Civita Vecchia, with the Duke of Edinburgh in command, I was invited to go down and spend a couple of nights on board one of the ships and was asked to dine on board the Flagship with the Duke. On that occasion I sat between the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince George, now King George V, an honour which has never since been accorded to me. The dinner, I remember, passed off very pleasantly, as, indeed, all entertainments at which I have been present on board any ship of the British Navy.

In April of 1888, Queen Victoria came to spend some weeks in Florence. She came with her Indian munshi, and John Brown, in his highland kilt. These attendants greatly interested the Florentines and the papers of Florence suggested that Her Majesty must have made a mistake in the dates and thought that she was coming out for the carnival. She lived at the famous Villa Palmieri, famous, as having been the scene of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and at this time the property of Lord Crawford, by whom it was lent to Her Majesty. My Chief was naturally required to be in attendance for some time, and asked me if I would accompany him as Private Secretary, to which of course I readily agreed. My duties were not onerous, as he was the least exacting of chiefs. I went two or three times to lunch at the Villa Palmieri with the Household, amongst whom was Arthur Bigge, afterwards Lord Stamfordham, and Private Secretary to the Queen and to King George. We used to go out for long walks

together, all round Florence, which I knew fairly well, having spent two winters there. In this way we laid the foundations of a sincere friendship which lasted until he died. I think I never met a man of better counsel and less self-interested. He knew, I suppose, more than any other living man of the things that had passed in political life during the long period of his service with two Sovereigns. He was not only entirely trusted by them, but also by all political leaders, no matter to what Party they belonged, and no man ever sought less for publicity. I hope that, some day, his memoirs and papers may be published for they should certainly prove a gold mine to the historians of our time.

I saw Queen Victoria, of course, several times, but was only presented to her once during this period, and this was, indeed, the only occasion that I ever had of speaking to, or rather, being spoken to by her. She made an ineffaceable impression on my mind. There was an extraordinary dignity and even grace in that short, round figure. All traces of beauty had left her face by then, but she had a very attractive, clear, low voice, if I remember right, which made up entirely for any lack of attraction in the face itself. She very kindly talked to me for some time about the benefit which the Emperor Frederick, who was then known to be dying of cancer, had received from his sojourn at Alta Chiara, Portofino, which Carnarvon had lent to him and to the Empress for some months during the winter. The Queen wanted to know all about it, and how it had come into Carnarvon's possession; it was evident that anything which had been closely connected with her eldest daughter and the tragedy of her life, interested her profoundly.

One other little incident of the Queen's sojourn in Florence has impressed itself on my mind. King Humbert came up to Florence to see her, although she was not officially in Italy but only there *incognita*, so to speak, as the "Countess of Balmoral." His visit therefore was not official and was extremely quiet. He was, however, accompanied by Signor Crispi, who was then

Prime Minister, and they both lunched with Her Majesty at the Villa Palmieri. Sir John Lumley lunched with their Majesties and I lunched with the Household. After lunch we all gathered in the principal drawing-room and Signor Crispi, for some curious reason which I cannot explain, before he left put on a pair of tight yellow dog-skin gloves with which, on taking leave of the Queen, he shook her warmly by the hand. I shall never forget the Queen's almost imperceptible smile and slightly arched eyebrows, as she turned and looked at Princess Beatrice after this unexpected salutation.

At the beginning of the summer of 1888 I was suddenly ordered to Berlin to take the place of Rennell Rodd (Ambassador at Rome during the Great War and now Lord Rennell) as Private Secretary to Sir Edward Malet who, although he was not yet fifty, had been for some time Ambassador in Berlin and was considered one of the most successful men in the Diplomatic service. He owed his appointment as Ambassador at Berlin not only to the fact that he had been extremely successful during a very difficult time as the head of our Mission in Egypt, but also because his father had been our Minister to Frankfurt in the revolutionary times of 1848-49 and had there known Bismarck and made friends with him. It seems that Bismarck had been attracted to Sir Edward when he met him as a young man at his father's house in Frankfurt, had followed his career, and when a vacancy occurred in our Embassy in Berlin, he took the opportunity of hinting that Malet's appointment would be agreeable to him. He continued to be very friendly to Malet up to the end, and used to see him frequently on questions of external importance. As long as he was Chancellor, the Minister of Foreign Affairs who, at that time, was his son, Count Herbert Bismarck, did little more than play second fiddle.

Bismarck always used to converse with Malet in English, and his English, though very fluent and perfectly clear, was sometimes rather quaint in its pronunciation. One day Malet came back from one of these interviews

much amused and told me that he had not, for a long time, been able to understand what Bismarck had meant, because the great man had kept on repeating to him: "Why can't we let bigg'uns be bigg'uns?"

This completely puzzled Malet, and he did not know what to say. It was only after two or three minutes that he discovered that the Chancellor's meaning was "bygones be bygones."

Edward Malet was sincerely attached to the great man and believed that he was perfectly genuine in his constant assurances of goodwill to England and of his desire for the maintenance of peace in Europe. In both respects I take it that Malet was justified. Bismarck had no wish to compete with Great Britain, either as a maritime or as a Colonial Power. As he said himself, he was "*Kein Kolonial Mensch*." He had united Germany by means of three wars, each of which had been carefully planned beforehand, and he had no wish for further adventures. His one desire seemed to be to guide his country along a path of peaceful and prosperous development by means of a paternal Government, he himself acting, of course, in the rôle of *paterfamilias*. This certainly suited us very well at the time, and there was no reason, as long as Bismarck remained at the head of the German State—which he could do, during the lifetime of the old Emperor, who gave way to him in practically everything—why Great Britain and Germany should not continue to be the best of friends. There were small tiffs from time to time, but none that gave any serious cause of anxiety, so far as I can remember, while Bismarck remained at the helm. Things however were changing very rapidly when I reached Berlin about ten days after the death of the Emperor Frederick, which occurred on the 15th June, 1888. Rennell Rodd remained on for about a month in order to give me my first lessons in the duties of a Private Secretary to the Ambassador. He was a most excellent tutor and we have always been the best of friends ever since.

The first thing, on my arrival in Berlin, that caused me

infinite surprise, was to discover what I had not realised from the papers, that the Empress Frederick was practically a prisoner in her own Palace at Potsdam. The long drawn-out agony of the Emperor Frederick's illness had no sooner come to an end than his son, the Emperor William II, then a young man of twenty-nine, ordered a cordon of soldiers to be placed round the Palace at Potsdam where he died and where the Empress was still living, and it was impossible for the Embassy, or anyone else without the special authority of the Emperor, to obtain access to, or indeed in any way communicate with her. Even letters and telegrams from her mother, Queen Victoria, do not appear to have been delivered, as I remember indignant telegrams from the Queen to the Ambassador asking why she could not get into communication with her daughter. The whole reason for this extraordinary behaviour on the part of the young Emperor was, it appeared later, that Bismarck and William II both feared that the Emperor Frederick had left behind a diary which might contain unpalatable information about people and things, especially, it was supposed, with regard to the conduct of the War of 1870, and Bismarck's treatment of the Liberal leaders in Germany, with whom the Emperor Frederick was known to have had considerable sympathy. This diary they wished to seize, in order to prevent its possible publication by the Empress Frederick. A minute search was, therefore, made all through the Palace in order to discover the diary in question, and it was not until this search was concluded, but without success, that the Empress was again allowed free communication with the outside world. The Byzantinism of these proceedings came, I must say, as a great shock to my youthful mind. I had been, as already stated, brought up with an immense admiration and affection for everything German. Here I suddenly found, on arrival in Germany, a method of procedure that was so entirely inconsistent with all my previously held English prejudices about liberty and—if I may say so—decent behaviour, that I was completely

nonplussed. My Chief and Rennell Rodd, who had been the object of special favours and kindnesses on the part of the Empress Frederick, were equally indignant. As an introduction to German official life nothing could have been less promising, and I must confess that my experience in Berlin, and everything that I have since read of transactions at the German Foreign Office, or at the Court of the Emperor William, have only confirmed the very unfortunate impression that I received during the first week of my stay at the Embassy.

Apart from the letters and telegrams from the Queen about the treatment of her daughter, the Empress Frederick, there was nothing at that moment to occupy specially the attention of the Ambassador, and I had plenty of time to get into the saddle, with the help of Rennell Rodd. Before continuing with a description of the life at the Embassy I may refer, very shortly, to the sequel to the story of the Emperor Frederick's Diary.

It had indeed been confided to Professor Geffcken, of Hamburg, a well-known Liberal, some time before the Emperor died. Many months passed before anything more was heard of it, but ultimately a version of it was published by the Professor. It contained nothing of interest respecting military operations during the War of 1870, but it did contain one item which apparently greatly irritated the Iron Chancellor. This was an entry to the effect that both Bismarck and the old Emperor William I were not in favour of accepting the German Imperial Crown at the hands of the German Princes at Versailles, both being of opinion that William as King of Prussia should, so to speak, place the crown on his own head. The Emperor Frederick (then Crown Prince of Prussia) went on to relate in his Diary that it was he who had overcome their opposition, and so brought about the establishment of the German Empire by agreement with the Princes instead of by imposition from above.

This account of the negotiations that preceded the declaration of the German Empire at Versailles, the culminating point of Bismarck's great work, roused the ire

of the Chancellor as being likely to rob him of some of the kudos rightly belonging to him. In any case poor Geffcken was arrested and condemned to three months' imprisonment for publishing it without previous consultation with the Emperor, which was contrary to the Prussian law for the protection of the Royal House of Prussia.

Both the Professor and the Diary have since passed into oblivion, and we shall probably never know what the latter contained.

By kind permission of Lord Rennell I reproduce here the following extract from Vol. I, pp. 158-59, of his book, *Social and Diplomatic Memories*, which contains much interesting matter on the Berlin of that time :

A curious sidelight is thrown on the temperament of Bismarck by a conversation which he had with our Ambassadors not long after the episode of the Diary. It reveals even more strongly than his attempt to discredit its authenticity or than the imprisonment of Geffcken, how intensely he resented the implication which it contained that any other but himself could have contributed to the structure of the German Empire or have assisted in overcoming the reluctance of the old King of Prussia to assume a new title. Bismarck had come to our Embassy to call on the Queen's birthday. The Ambassador was out, but while leaving his card on which he had written " God Save the Queen," he learned that the Ambassadors was at home and he asked to see her. She came down not a little preoccupied at such an unusual occurrence as a visit from the Chancellor, who seldom paid such attention to ladies.

He began by repeating his congratulations on the anniversary and appeared to be in the genial humour which so well became him when he chose to display it. Then, quite suddenly, his manner changed, and his face assumed that angry and almost malignant look that boded storm, and he said that he had something besides congratulatory messages to convey to the Ambassador. As the latter was not at home he would say it to her and she would repeat his words. " I want him to know," he said, speaking in English, and " I want your countrymen to know that it was I and only I who alone made this German Empire. It was my sole work. And how do you think I accomplished this ? How did I succeed in triumphing over every obstacle and in crushing every man who stood in my way ? " He paused for an answer, repeating his question. Then, as he received no reply, he continued : " I will tell you. All this I achieved—through—what is the word ? It is a word that Irish often use ;

yes, through *cunning*. I set one man against another and again and again I broke them. Well, there was a moment, after the Peace at Versailles, when I saw the work of my life crumbling before me after all my efforts. The King of Prussia refused to assume the position of German Emperor, and I was in despair. But once more my cunning stood me in good stead. I set one man against another. I told him that if he would not agree to my proposals there was another sovereign who would, and that I should address myself to the King of Bavaria. That settled the issue."

During the summer months the Ambassador used to take a charming old-fashioned eighteenth-century villa at Potsdam, on the Jungfrau See, on the shores of which there was a cottage where, with his usual hospitality, he would put up any of the staff whose presence was not actually required in Berlin itself to decipher telegrams that might come during the night. Those down at Potsdam used to come up to Berlin for the day and return to Potsdam early in the afternoon, when it was the Ambassador's delight to go out rowing on the chain of lakes that stretched for miles in almost every direction, surrounded by fir and beech woods, with occasional farm-houses and gardens, at that time full of flowering lilac bushes. It was a very pleasant existence and, in order to make the journey to and from Berlin more pleasant, I speedily got myself a horse and used to ride the eighteen miles back and forth, through the great pine woods, when it was necessary for me to go up to town. As however my duties as Private Secretary kept me more or less at the Ambassador's side, I spent more time at Potsdam than the other members of the Staff.

Potsdam is indeed, or was in those days, a singularly beautiful place in summer. There were not only lakes and woods, but there were also the eighteenth-century palaces and gardens, of which "*Sans Souci*," the Palace of Frederick the Great, is especially charming, and besides that the little old-world town itself, with its eighteenth-century houses and cobbled pavements, all of which, I suppose, have long ago given way to so-called modern improvements. Our existence there was an extraordinarily

pleasant and peaceful one. We were a very happy family in the Chancery, and the Ambassador was kindness itself.

Malet was rather a strange combination of strict conventionality and etiquette as long as he was in his Embassy in Berlin, and of everything opposed thereto as soon as he could get away from Ambassadorial surroundings, when his natural inclination for a Bohemian life got the better of him. There was nothing he loved so much as going away for two or three days on a little excursion, it mattered not where, provided he could put up at some small country inn, his rank unknown to the innkeeper, and just potter about, doing nothing particular and smoking endless cigarettes. I accompanied him on these expeditions on more than one occasion, for he never could go alone. I remember particularly once his almost childlike pleasure when, after he had grown tired of some little Prussian town, we packed our few belongings and went down to the station, intending to go on to the next place. Suddenly the spirit of adventure seized him, and he said: "Why shouldn't we leave it to chance in what direction we go?" Taking a coin out of his pocket, he added: "Heads it's north and tails it's south," and so it was. I have forgotten where we landed, but it was all the same to me. Bohemian though he really was, he always expected to be comfortably housed when he went to pay his respects to the numerous German Courts to which he was accredited, and his indignation knew no bounds when on one occasion he had not been provided even with a hip-bath at the palace of some Grand Duchess or other. He was always very chary of spending a night under the hospitable roof of these numerous Princes after that, and I believe some of them caused complaints to be made to Buckingham Palace in consequence. But for this he cared very little.

He told me a story of the way in which Bismarck treated some of these potentates, who were extremely particular about their own dignity. I suppose he got the story from Bismarck himself, and it was this:

One evening at a dinner at the Palace in Berlin, Bismarck

was placed next to one of the German Grand Duchesses of whom he was not particularly fond. She irritated him by complaining about the lack of courtesy, over some trifling matter, with which her household had been treated by the Berlin authorities. He asked her brusquely if she knew an old house in *Unter den Linden*, which looked very much out of date in that fashionable street. She said that she had observed it, and asked him why he mentioned it. He said that the Municipality of Berlin had been trying for a long time to buy it and pull it down, in order to build something more up to date, but had not been able to do so. Then he said significantly: "It's much easier to pull down a German Prince than a house in *Unter den Linden*." After that she left him alone.

Bismarck had been for so many years the complete master in the German Reich, that it was of course almost impossible that he and the young Emperor should work together harmoniously for long. From the first, although the Emperor appeared to have most profound respect and admiration for the national hero, who had united Germany and was unquestionably the greatest figure in the Europe of that day, people began to wonder how long it would last before a breach occurred, for Bismarck no more hesitated to speak out his mind to the Emperor than he did in speaking to a Grand Duchess at a Palace dinner-party. He had indeed become extremely dictatorial. Whether intentionally or otherwise, the Emperor cleverly chose the subject of social legislation as a reason for a break with the old man.

The German Government had already led the way in what was, for that time, an advanced law with regard to Workmen's Insurance against old age and sickness. Having had myself to translate and write a report on this extremely complicated piece of legislation, I knew it fairly thoroughly, and was very much impressed by its value for the welfare of the working classes. It had given the Emperor's government considerable popularity, from which he personally undoubtedly benefited, and

people believed that he was likely to turn out to be, not as had at first been thought, an ultra Conservative but, so far as care for the welfare of the working classes was concerned, quite as Liberal as his father would have been. This inclined him towards measures of social legislation which went a great deal further than the old Iron Chancellor was prepared to go. There were said to have been violent scenes between them, and finally in March, 1890, the old man, never dreaming that it would be accepted, tendered his resignation and found himself, to his surprise and indignation, out of office.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the German people, and indeed of the whole of Europe, when it was discovered that this immense Colossus, whose word had been law in international affairs for so many years, was suddenly removed from power. He himself admittedly took it very ill. The Emperor conferred upon him the feudal title of Duke of Lauenburg, which was higher in rank than that of Prince Bismarck, but, without rejecting it, he would never make use of it. The story went that one day, before he left Berlin, he received an autograph letter from the Emperor, addressed to "His Highness The Duke of Lauenburg." He looked at the envelope and then said before the assembled company: "Why does he address me in this way when I told him that I should only call myself by that name when I was travelling incognito."

Bismarck left Berlin on March 29th, 1890. The Chancellor's Palace is in the Wilhelmstrasse, only a few doors away from the Embassy. Malet had said to me that he would go to the station to say good-bye to the old man, no matter what the Emperor thought. He said:

"I've known him ever since I was a boy, and he's always been kind to me. I can't let him go, now that he has fallen from favour, without shaking him by the hand. I shall expect you to come to the station with me."

I was of course delighted to be present on such an historic occasion. Malet thought he would drive to the station immediately after the Prince and his family had

left, as it would be difficult to pass the cordon of police before. We saw the old Prince, accompanied by Count Herbert and one of his enormous Danish dogs, drive past the windows of the Embassy in an open carriage, amidst the wild cheering of a tremendous crowd, to which he however seemed to pay little attention. We were just getting ready to enter the Ambassador's brougham, when there was a movement in the crowd, and the Empress Frederick's carriage drove up to the door of the Embassy. The hour was an early one, at which the Empress had never called before. Malet said to me :

"I can't think why she has come now, unless it is to prevent me from going to the station to say good-bye, but I shall go, all the same."

We went down the steps of the Embassy to receive the Empress, and he handed her out of her carriage and accompanied her into the house. He then said :

"I am very sorry that I must leave Your Majesty to be entertained by Lady Ermyntrode (Lady Ermyntrode, his wife, was a daughter of the Duke of Bedford), who is waiting for Your Majesty in the drawing-room. I hope Your Majesty will excuse me, if I go at once to say good-bye to Prince Bismarck at the station ; I fear that otherwise I may not be in time to see him before he goes."

The Empress graciously signified her assent and, quite contrary to all rules of etiquette, we left her, jumped into the carriage, had difficulty in making our way through the streets to the station, and arrived to find the station absolutely packed with cheering, enthusiastic crowds, singing "*Die Wacht am Rhine*."

The station-master, informed of the arrival of the British Ambassador, at once hurried to Prince Bismarck's carriage to tell him. There was a silence as the old Chancellor stepped out and came towards us. He was evidently deeply moved by the fact that Malet had dared, in the circumstances, to come and pay him this final mark of respect. They spoke together for a short time, while the crowds remained silent, and I thought I detected—but it may have been merely imagination on my part—

a tear in Bismarck's eye. Before he left, Malet introduced me to him, and this was the only time that I ever had the opportunity of shaking hands with that extraordinary man. I had seen him many times, but never had been so impressed by his immense size and the massive ruggedness of his face. That was a morning which stands out very vividly among my memories.

I don't think I am wrong in saying that, after this, the Emperor William was never quite the same to Sir Edward Malet. Although it must be admitted that, when he came to the Embassy to dine, as he did once or twice every winter, he was always most charming, and he had, to a supreme degree, what in America is called "the glad hand," which made him particularly popular with casual acquaintances.

Judging by the memoirs of German statesmen who served him, he was not so popular with those with whom he was in daily contact. He was indeed distinctly histrionic, always acting his part, and extraordinarily vain : that was perhaps his dominating quality. Very quick, but with little judgment and no balance ; extremely sensitive, with a mediæval belief in the sanctity of his Imperial Crown, yet essentially weak in character. It would be hardly possible to find, in the history of the ages, a more dangerous man to have been placed, in critical times, in such a position of vast responsibility at the head of the most powerful nation in Europe.

Years afterwards, in Washington, Miss Mabel Boardman, the niece of Mr. Phelps, who was American Minister in Berlin in 1888, reminded me of the impression he had made upon us at the opening of his first Reichstag, which took place in one of the great halls of the Palace in Berlin. Surrounded by all his generals, himself in military uniform, with the great crimson cloak of the Order of the Black Eagle, he stood there, the emblem of military force, and in his peculiarly clear, dominating and incisive voice, began his speech, looking round him as if to see that he was making the proper effect.

"I . . . William . . . by the grace of God . . .

German Emperor . . . King of Prussia. . . ." It is of course impossible to reproduce the exact tone, but the effect of it at the time was certainly both impressive and startling. Looking back, it seemed to Miss Boardman and myself that the whole thing was a magnificent piece of play-acting.

Count Herbert Bismarck I remember well. He was constantly at the Embassy and was on intimate terms with some of the members. From time to time, after the theatre, we used to have a truly Berlin supper of smoked salmon and Munich beer with him in one of the little beer-houses in *Unter den Linden*. He was a very agreeable companion and extremely outspoken. One of his sayings remains in my mind. Apropos of what I don't remember, he declared that seven months' children were generally fools. One of the company mildly suggested that the old Emperor William had been a seven months' child, to which Herbert Bismarck retorted: "Well, it's true he wasn't such a fool—for an Emperor."

Moltke also I occasionally saw out riding in the Tiergarten, but I never unfortunately had an opportunity to be presented to him.

The Empress Frederick, I suppose on account of having known my sister and brother-in-law fairly well, and having lived for months in their house at Portofino, used from time to time to invite me in solitary grandeur to her Palace in the evenings. These were unquestionably the most awful entertainments I have ever attended; not because the Empress, or any of those about her, were anything but entirely friendly and kind, but because of the terrific atmosphere of mourning which pervaded the whole place after the death of the Emperor Frederick. The Empress herself, the three Princesses and the Grande Maitresse, Countess Brockdorf, were dressed in crape from head to foot. The long room in which we sat was scarcely lighted, with the exception of one large picture of the Emperor Frederick, the frame of which was draped in crape. This dominated the entire scene, and made it

almost impossible to forget his tragic death. After the Empress had spoken to me for some time, I used to be turned over to the Princesses, and on one occasion we were actually given a card table, and I was asked to teach them some game. The result of this was that we became lively in spite of our surroundings, and even laughed. Countess Brockdorf swept up to me, looking more like a black shadow than a real person, and whispered : " The Empress does not like loud laughter." It was a relief when these invitations ceased because the Empress went away to live at Homburg.

In 1890 Sir Percy Anderson, the head of the African Department of the Foreign Office, was sent out on a special mission to Berlin in order to negotiate with the German Government the question, which had recently come to a head, of the partition of East Africa, including Zanzibar, between England and Germany. Both British and German explorers had been busy for some time, as the habit was in those days, planting the flags of their countries in divers parts of the Dark Continent. The year 1890 saw the pioneer expedition of the South Africa Chartered Company move up from Cape Colony to what is now Rhodesia, and take over a part of that territory known as Mashonaland for the British Crown. North of the Zambesi all was in a state of chaos ; there was no demarcation between lands claimed by the British and those which the German Government, now that Bismarck had disappeared, claimed to possess. This question, then, of the demarcation of East Africa, from the Zambesi up to Somaliland, had become of urgent importance, and there was a violent newspaper controversy carried on in both countries which did not tend to make relations any more friendly.

The German Government, under Chancellor von Caprivi, who was most reasonable and pacifically inclined, readily accepted the British proposal to send out Sir Percy Anderson in order to come to an agreed settlement of this delicate question. One of the German papers, I remember, announced his arrival in the following words :

*"Herr Anderson is aus London angekommen mit grossem Magen fur Afrika."*¹

I was more or less attached to Sir Percy during his negotiations. Having already been, to some extent, infected by what was then known as African fever, I became more and more deeply interested in all questions connected with the development of our African Colonies. For Cecil Rhodes, the Empire Builder, I got an enthusiastic admiration, as also for the minor lights in this work, such as H. H. Johnston and one or two more. I steeped myself in the literature dealing with the opening-up of Africa of the time, and could think of little else. The maintenance of the Stevenson Road in British hands, which probably none of the younger people to-day have ever heard of, seemed to me then to be a matter of life and death. Old Sir Percy, for whom I conceived a great affection, was far too slow-going and even indifferent for my taste, but he was unquestionably extremely shrewd and wise, and he knew his subject as thoroughly as anybody who had only dealt with it from a room in the Foreign Office could possibly do. He quite realised that it was essential to meet Germany half-way over the question and, as a matter of fact, the troubles which the newspapers foresaw melted like snow under the plain common-sense handling of Sir Percy and the head of the German African Department. I often wondered, however, how the unfortunate natives would take it if they knew that two kindly old gentlemen, sitting in a room in Berlin, with maps and rulers, were drawing lines across their respective territories with no more consideration of their tribal interests than a gardener mapping out his garden would have for the respective territory of robins. It was easy, perhaps, to call in question the rights of the two Great Powers thus to indulge in map-making at the expense of "ignorant savages," but, after all, the practical issue was, both for them and for us, that a settlement of the question, which was inevitable

¹ Translation : "Mr. Anderson has arrived from London with a great stomach for Africa."

at the time, should be carried out peacefully and by agreement.

The one question which caused the greatest difficulty, as far as I remember, was the fate of the island of Zanzibar, the protection of which neither the English nor the Germans were willing to abandon. How far the stubbornness of the German Government was genuine, or whether it was merely staged for bargaining purposes, I cannot tell, but the fact remains that when we seemed to have got to a deadlock which would have ended the whole negotiations, a proposal was made by the Germans that we should give up the island of Heligoland in return for their recognition of our protectorate over Zanzibar. There was naturally a considerable outcry about this at the time, but finally the British public, or that part of it which was interested in the matter, was in the main persuaded of what seemed to be a fundamental truth: that Heligoland was really of no practical importance to us. It would have been impossible for us ever to fortify Heligoland, without producing so great a tension between Germany and England that it might have become almost a *casus belli*. On the other hand, an unfortified Heligoland could really be of no possible use to us, either in peace or war. There were many who, during the Great War, criticised our abandonment of Heligoland on that occasion, but I confess that it seems, to my non-expert mind, that it would have been quite hopeless for us to attempt to retain it during the Great War, and that it could not have been anything but a source of weakness.

Once the Zanzibar-Heligoland deal was completed, everything went swimmingly, and Sir Percy departed in high spirits, with a new map of East Africa in his pocket.

These negotiations, and the interest that they aroused in me with respect to the extension and development of the British Empire in Africa, brought to a head the feeling of unrest which had been simmering in me for the past year or two. I felt I could not continue in this humdrum life of the Diplomatic Service; what was known as "the

Call of the Wild" possessed itself of me to an ever-increasing degree, and I finally made up my mind to ask the Foreign Office for two years *disponibilité*. This would give me the opportunity of deciding what career I should ultimately choose (for I had also a great desire to follow in the steps of my brother Stafford and take up a Parliamentary career), while it would give me the opportunity I longed for, of seeing something of those countries about which we had been negotiating, and of enjoying the delights of a really wild camp life.

I remember that I wrote to my mother, in a moment of exaltation, that I felt my life in Berlin to be a sort of cross between that of a footman and a pet lamb. This did not at all convince her that I was doing a wise thing. Sir Edward Malet did his best to dissuade me, saying that I was throwing away the substance for the shadow, but I was young and tremendously enthusiastic—a happy condition on which words of wisdom produce little effect.

Of social entertainment there was in those days in Berlin but a very moderate amount. The Prussian land-owners as a class were not rich, apart from a few of the great Silesian magnates, neither were they given to lavish entertainments. The magnates of the other German States revolved like planets round the suns of their own particular little Courts. For these reasons dinner-parties and balls were conspicuous by their absence except in the houses of some of the great Jewish financiers like the Bleichröders and the Mendelssohns, who were always glad to get hold of a member of the Diplomatic Corps for their parties. Evil-minded gossip said that they even went so far as to pay some of the smart officers and impecunious younger sons of the Prussian nobility to eat their dinners.

On account of the lack of social gatherings among the members of Berlin society outside the Diplomatic Corps, we were thrown very much on our own resources, and though I grumbled, like the rest of the diplomats, about this at the time, I am very grateful to this particular side

of Berlin life because it enabled me to pay far more attention to the magnificent concerts for which Berlin at that time was especially renowned. The Opera was extremely second-rate, and apparently always had been so, and if one wanted to hear good opera in Germany it was necessary to go either to Dresden or to Munich. But the great Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Hans von Bulow, and the Quartets, led by the famous old violinist Joachim, were unsurpassed in any country at that time, and even I suppose one may say at any time, though in some respects the New York and the Philadelphia Orchestras in later years, especially under the direction of Toscanini, may have been even more perfect. Certain of the Hans von Bülow renderings of the Beethoven Symphonies one could never forget, as also the Joachim Quartet renderings of the Beethoven and Bach Chamber music. Besides the Bülow concerts there was also a delightful but more popular Concert Hall, where rather lighter music was played in a very perfect manner. Here one could take a box, if I remember right, for five or six shillings, recline on a couch at the back, with a delicious pot of Munich beer at one's side, and a good Hamburg cigar—which was almost given away—between one's teeth, and very comfortably meditate on the pleasures of life.

The Hof Theater and the Deutsches Theater of that day were far better than the Opera, and I used occasionally to go with Sir Edward Malet, who was a great lover of the theatre, to see one of the classical German plays of Schiller, Goethe or Lessing, as well as Shakespeare's plays, in German, admirably acted. The Germans indeed had adopted Shakespeare to such an extent that they almost began to believe that he belonged to them by right of adoption. I could not help feeling that there was considerable justice in this claim, for there was hardly a city of any size where some plays of Shakespeare were not acted during the course of the year, and he was, at that time at least, unquestionably far more generally appreciated and read in Germany than in England.

In spite of the fact that I had many good friends at the Embassy, from my Chief and the Councillor, Le Poer Trench, to all my colleagues in the Chancery, and in spite of the joys of the music and of Potsdam in the summer, I left Berlin without regrets. This was partly, no doubt, on account of my enthusiastic anticipation of what Africa might bring me, as well as because the city of Berlin itself was, and has always remained, entirely *antipatica* to me, and I have a catlike feeling about places ; once I have taken a like or dislike it does not alter. Moreover, I think I may say that I had, even then, been so disagreeably impressed by the Court and official life of Berlin that I was glad to sever all connection therewith, without any prospect of returning.

While I was at Berlin my second sister, Maud, married Francis Leyborne Popham, of Littlecote, a delightful Elizabethan house on the Kennet, which was then a perfect stream for dry fly-fishing, especially of course in the mayfly season. The house itself possessed one of the authenticated ghost stories of England, which originated in this way :

In the reign of Elizabeth it belonged to a gentleman called Wild Darrell, who had inherited it in very suspicious circumstances from his elder brother, whose wife was about to become a mother when he died. Wild Darrell was the heir-presumptive. The baby was duly born, but was said to be stillborn. For some time nobody doubted that all had occurred as stated, but later a curious story began to circulate. A midwife, who had lived a considerable distance away, related that she had been called in haste on that particular night to attend the mistress of a house which she did not know ; that a live male child had been born and was immediately carried out of the room, and that the whole proceedings had so aroused her suspicions that she had cut a small piece of material from the bed curtains in order, should she ever be called upon to give evidence, to identify the place in which these events had occurred. She further said that she had heard the cries of the child in the next room, and

had been seriously troubled by a smell of burning flesh issuing from the same room. Wild Darrell was tried for the murder of the child, the Judge being Judge Popham, who was afterwards Chief Justice under Queen Elizabeth. The chances of a verdict in Wild Darrell's favour appeared to be extremely slight ; nevertheless he was acquitted by the Judge and, strange to say, he left Littlecote and the whole property to Judge Popham at his death, which occurred a few years afterwards. People who slept in the bed in this room had often complained that they heard in the night the cries of an infant and smelt burning flesh. This had not unnaturally upset them almost as much as it did the Elizabethan Mrs. Gamp. The result was that no guests were ever put into this room during the time that I can remember Littlecote.

The hall of Littlecote was interesting, as it was hung round with buff leather jerkins, helmets and other accoutrements of a Company raised by the Popham of the day to fight in the Cromwellian Army. There was a beautiful Long Gallery of the Elizabethan type, filled with fine furniture and one or two good portraits, and there was also, which was interesting, a private chapel of the Cromwellian period, clearly for use by some Independent minister. Francis Popham, my brother-in-law, unfortunately fell upon bad times, and the house was first let for a number of years to my friend, Vernon Watney, and afterwards sold. I don't know to whom it belongs now.

During my sojourn in Berlin my brother-in-law Carnarvon died, a blow from which my eldest sister never really recovered. She was left with a family of four step-children and two young boys of her own, Aubrey and Mervyn. She lived afterwards between her house at Pixton in Somerset and the Villa at Porto Fino.

I left Berlin before Christmas, 1890, and spent my Christmas holidays as usual in Cumberland, to which I always returned whenever possible. I went up to London afterwards with my mother to make arrangements for the great adventure in Africa.

My mother, who could never bear to be very long, or very far, away from me, announced that although she hated nothing so much as a sea journey, she would come with me, at any rate as far as the Cape, and wait for me there until my return from Mashonaland. My brothers and sisters tried to dissuade her, but nothing would move her from this plan and, all things considered, she was a born traveller and enjoyed anything in the shape of a new experience. I believe that she spent a very happy ten months out at the Cape, although she was by herself practically all the time.

Sir Percy Anderson introduced me to one or two men with African experience, who gave me hints as to outfit. I got a letter of introduction to Cecil Rhodes from Albert Grey, afterwards Earl Grey, Governor-General of Canada, who was a friend of my brother Stafford, both being Liberal M.P.'s, and one or two other letters to leading people at the Cape. Sending most of our luggage by the old Castle liner, *Drummond Castle*, my mother and I left for Lisbon overland, where we were to pick up the boat.

We stopped a few days in Madrid on our way, and dined frequently with old Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, the British Minister, who was a first cousin of my mother's. We visited the Prado and other sights of Madrid, as well as Toledo and the Escorial, both of which impressed me enormously, an impression which many subsequent visits have only constantly emphasised. The Velazquez pictures of the Prado were a revelation, and although not by any means so beautifully arranged and displayed as at present were most amazing in their grandeur and magnificence. Sir Henry Wolff was a most entertaining host, and my memories of Madrid during that short visit were such that when I re-entered the Diplomatic Service, it became one of my ambitions to return there *en poste*.

From Madrid we went to Lisbon, where a kinsman of mine, Sir George Petre, was Minister, and here again therefore we saw the best of everything. I think that the spot which I remember best in and around Lisbon was the great Camellia garden under the Castle at Cintra,

with its camellia trees twenty and thirty feet high (if I am not mistaken), all covered with white and pink blossoms, and the ground below carpeted with white and pink petals. The view from the tower of Cintra too is, I suppose, one of the most beautiful in the world, and the climate at that time of year was enchanting. Altogether, Lisbon struck me as a most agreeable place for a protracted stay, and I returned there some years afterwards for some months in order to learn Portuguese before travelling to Brazil.

Our journey from Lisbon to the Cape was extremely pleasant and uneventful. We made the usual landing at Madeira, and we saw the Peak of Teneriffe in the distance. On board were Sir Henry Loch (afterwards Lord Loch), the Governor of Cape Colony, with his wife and Private Secretary, Seymour Fort, who was then and afterwards a very good friend to me. The Lochs were great friends of Carnarvon and my sister, and this was very fortunate for my mother, who would have to spend so much time alone at Cape Town. Both were perfectly charming people, and our intimacy with them and the Colonial Secretary, Sir Graham Bower, was, of course, of the greatest use to me during my travels up-country.

CHAPTER IV

JOURNEY TO SOUTH AFRICA, MASHONALAND AND EAST AFRICA

(1891)

THE first sight of Table Bay and Table Mountain, which was also my first sight of Africa, was one which I shall never forget. I shall not attempt a description of it—it has been described over and over again. But I may, at least, say that it is one of those extraordinarily impressive landscapes which must have an effect even upon a most unimaginative mind. We landed, if I am not mistaken, before noon, on a calm, bright, sunny autumn day about the end of February, 1891. I was of course enchanted and so was my mother, with the complete novelty of everything. The old-fashioned horse- and mule-drawn carriages of every description, most of which in their better days—perhaps forty years before—had paraded Hyde Park, mingled with the enormous lumbering open or tented Boer wagons, drawn by sixteen oxen, and almost invariably driven by wizened yellow-faced Hottentots; the various types of negroes, the number of Malays, often dressed in bright colours; the heavy, sturdy figures of the Cape Dutch and the rather more active-looking Britishers; all combined in a setting of old Dutch houses with gables, and modern, square, ugly red-brick houses of British design, with the background of Table Mountain and avenues of great pine trees, acacias and eucalyptus; with clouds of dust which almost took the place of a London fog: these made up a picture so varied and so exciting that I was almost swept off my feet.

My mother and I, with our light luggage, got into one

of the old-fashioned carriages and drove off to a boarding-house in the suburb of Wynberg, where rooms had been engaged for us beforehand by some kind friend, as being far pleasanter, quieter, cleaner and less dusty than the extraordinary antiquated hotels of Cape Town itself. The road to Wynberg, running under Table Mountain, was a series of avenues, with small and pleasant houses on either side, all of which had large gardens and many fine trees. Altogether it would have been difficult to find a more enchanting place for a rest cure.

Our boarding-house was large, with airy rooms, scrupulously clean but extremely simply furnished. The other inhabitants were mainly business people from Cape Town and elderly retired merchants and Civil Servants. I suppose that we were perhaps a dozen altogether. It was the first time that I had ever come into contact with boarding-house life, and it amused me exceedingly for the short time that I remained at Cape Town, making arrangements for my journey inland.

On board ship I had struck up a great friendship with a young man, Algernon St. George Caulfeild. He was only just of age and was stepson of Sir Horace Rumbold, afterwards British Ambassador at Vienna, whose son was until recently our Ambassador in Berlin. Algy Caulfeild was going out to South Africa to join the Chartered Company's Police Force, and I had little difficulty in persuading him to drop this plan and to come up-country with me on the chance of my being able to pick up something good in Mashonaland, in the way of a mine. It was a pure toss-up for him, but he accepted very willingly, and certainly as far as I was concerned, the arrangement was a most satisfactory one which I never regretted, for a more charming and delightful companion it would have been impossible to find. He was always perfectly ready to do anything and everything about the camp, and had, besides, a sort of genius for carpentry and mechanics which made him invaluable on a journey of this kind.

I don't know what I should have done without him, had I been thrown back entirely for companionship on the four Australian prospectors who also accompanied me up-country—but of them later. The only criticism I ever made of my friend Algy was that, in the middle of the desert, he would insist upon appearing to be as clean, neat and smart as if he was going for a walk in Hyde Park. I, on the other hand—I say it with shame—was determined to look as much like a backwoodsman as possible, and to cast off all the refinements of civilisation in which, if in nothing else on this journey, I feel I succeeded.

The first thing that I wished to do after arrival was to get into contact with Rhodes, who was then for me a sort of demigod. I left my letter of introduction to him at his curious little cottage not far from Wynberg, which struck me as an amazingly modest abode for a man who was one of the richest, if not the richest, in the world at that day, and then, pending an answer, I asked Seymour Fort, Sir Henry Loch's private secretary, if he could take me round to the Parliament House and give me a sight of the great man. In a day or two he let me know that Rhodes would be there at a certain hour, when he would come with me. As we walked up to the Parliament House together, I saw a large figure of a man, with a rather rolling gait, in not over-clean grey flannels, with a somewhat battered straw hat on his head, his hands thrust deeply into his trouser pockets and his jacket pulled up to his waist, showing an enormous breadth of beam, wandering meditatively upon the road before us.

Fort said to me: "There you are! That's Rhodes."

I gazed on the curious back, deeply impressed with an astonishment that was only to grow as I got to know him better. On my return home I found a very pleasant note from him asking me to dine in a day or two. We were only men at the dinner, and the dining-room could not have held more than eight or ten at the most. Who were there I cannot exactly remember, except C. D. Rudd,

who was afterwards always most friendly to me. He was Rhodes's principal partner on the Rand, and was the man who, at the risk of his life, had, with Thomas MaGuire, obtained the Mashonaland Concession from Lobengula, the great Chief of the Matabele. I think Jan Hofmeyer was also there, the leader of the Afrikaner Bond; Graham Bower, the Colonial Secretary, and some others, political and mining stars. Anyhow, I was delighted to find myself suddenly plunged into the very centre of a small society of the men active in the politics and financial world of the Cape, on which, at that time in England, general attention was focused.

But it was Rhodes himself naturally who was the star performer, and him I shall never forget. His large, stocky figure, surmounted by the head of a Roman Emperor, which was yet extremely British on account of the naturally ruddy complexion, deepened by years of African sun to a rich brick colour, in which were set large, vague, dreamy grey eyes, surmounted by a high forehead with a shock of reddish hair, made him one of the most extraordinary figures I have ever seen. He at once produced on me the impression that Bismarck did when I came up to him in the station in Berlin on the day of his departure: that of a Colossus, who was different to and above other men, and could hardly be judged by the same standards.

The dinner was simple enough, but the wine, and especially the champagne, was noteworthy for its excellence; that was the one luxury which Rhodes allowed himself. After dinner, when we were all sitting together smoking, he turned upon me and asked me what the Foreign Office was thinking about affairs in Mashonaland, especially with regard to the relations with Portugal.

This was, of course, an effort on his part to draw me as to what the feeling was at the Foreign Office about his efforts to acquire, in some way or other, the harbour of Beira, at the mouth of the Pungwe river, in Portuguese

East Africa, which was the natural outlet of Mashonaland to the sea. Apart from the division of northern East Africa with Germany, this was at the time perhaps the most acute question in foreign politics which the scramble for Africa had raised.

I said I was extremely sorry, but since I had left the Foreign Office I had heard nothing on the subject, and I felt sure that he could give me much more information than I could give him.

Upon which his dreamy eyes lit up with a sort of malicious fun, and he said :

“ Oh, yes, I'll tell you all that is going on in London. Soveral [the Portuguese Minister, who was a great favourite with the smart set in London at that time] is going round to dine with the Duchess of this and the Countess of that [he mentioned names which I need not reproduce ; they will occur to anybody who remembers those days], and after dinner he gets excited, ruffles his hair [Soveral was as bald as a coot, but Rhodes ruffled his own hair], then falls on his knees [Rhodes fell on his knees before his nearest guest], and with hands clasped, begs them ‘ to go at once to the Prince of Wales and save him and Portugal from the clutches of that arch-fiend, Rhodes.’ ”

The whole of this was done with so much sense of mimicry and comedy—besides also having a considerable basis of truth in it—that we were all convulsed, and I never think of Rhodes without that scene coming to my mind. It is the kind of thing that I have never come across in any biography of him, and it threw a ray upon the humorous side of his character which was a real revelation to me.

He asked me questions, of course, about his great friend, Albert Grey, and others in London, which I was fortunately better able to answer than the first. Then he asked me what I wanted. I told him quite frankly that I wanted to go up to Mashonaland with an ox-wagon and, if possible, one or two prospectors who would be able to give me some sort of report as to the gold prospects of the

country. Of course, if we stumbled on a gold mine so much the better, but if not I should have, at any rate, acquired an immense amount of information which would be most valuable to me in the Parliamentary career I hoped to enter.

He asked me what my politics were, and I told him, roughly, that in the first place I was a convinced Home Ruler but, at the same time, deeply interested in the future of the Empire. He said he would talk to me about that later. For the moment I had better get a few stores in Cape Town but, for the main part, fit myself out at Kimberley, where I could get a wagon, oxen, etc. He would give me a recommendation to the Mayor of Kimberley, who would help me and prevent me from being fleeced by the storekeepers. This he did, also giving me a general letter of recommendation to the Chartered Company Police and to Dr. Jameson and Mr. Harris, who were at that time in charge of the Company's affairs at Fort Salisbury, the lately established capital of Mashonaland. He then turned to C. D. Rudd, and asked him to take charge of me as far as finding some prospectors, who would come up with me and be useful for my purpose. Rudd said that he knew of a party of four Australians who had just come over and were anxious to get somebody to take them up to Mashonaland. He thought they would be the very thing for me, and said he would put me in touch with them the following day.

Rhodes at that date was not only *the* multi-millionaire of South Africa—there were many lesser financial lights—he was also Prime Minister of the Cape, having put into practice the principles of amalgamation among conflicting parties which he had found so useful in the Kimberley diamond mines, and which had given him the title of "The Great Amalgamator." He had won over to his side men like Jan Hofmeyer, the President of the Afrikaner Bond, which was a Union of the Cape Dutch, who had been up to then distinctly unwilling to work with any English Prime Minister, and were causing

the same sort of trouble in the Cape Parliament as the Parnellite Party were causing at Westminster, and also men of such different political views as John Xavier Merriman and so on. Rhodes was, further, at that time a great power, if not the greatest power on the Rand, and therefore deeply involved in Transvaal affairs, which he hoped to settle by friendly agreement on reasonable lines, and perhaps a certain amount of Machiavellian diplomacy with old President Kruger; and, finally, he was the founder of that great African adventure, the Chartered Company of South Africa, which gave him in England something of the halo of the great Empire-builders of Elizabethan and Jacobean times. It was not surprising that he dominated the stage in South Africa.

C. D. Rudd very kindly promised to arrange a meeting between me and the Australians and, in the usual hospitable way of overseas Britishers, at once invited me and my mother to dinner.

Merriman, who I think was also at this dinner, was a man of singular charm. The son of a former bishop of the Cape, he had been educated at an English public school and at Oxford. He was a finished speaker, in fact recognised as the best speaker of the Cape Parliament. His wife was of Cape Dutch extraction, and this no doubt inclined him to be always seeking to establish better relations with the Dutch throughout South Africa. For this reason he became an ally of Cecil Rhodes, though he did not like his policy of adventure. He parted company with Rhodes very bitterly after the Jameson Raid, and was considered, in England at any rate, to be almost a traitor during the South African War, because of his pronounced pro-Boer attitude. In spite of our differences of opinion at that time, we remained great friends, and whenever he came over to England we never failed to meet and exchange views on current topics. During the time I was at Cape Town we frequently rode out over the plains to the north of Table Mountain together. The last time I ever met him was in 1912,

when I was Minister at Berne, when, I remember, we had a long walk on the mountains behind Thun, which he, although he was then well over seventy, negotiated with the activity of a man half his age. He was tall, spare and with remarkably fine, clear-cut features, and even those who disagreed with him violently in politics could not but admire the sincerity of his convictions and feel the personal charm of the man.

A day or two after Rhodes's dinner, Algy Caulfeild and I met our four Australians for the first time. They were : Low, a born Australian, tall, gaunt, with a shock of black hair, a scraggy beard, an eagle's beak of a nose and eagle's penetrating eyes ; a remarkable personality but not always easy to deal with. He was a violent Radical and Republican, strongly in favour of Australia's independence from England, for which country he had no use whatever. He mocked at all religion, at monarchy, at all class differences, at the rich Australian landowners, for whom he had a special aversion—in fact, at everything which was outside his own rather narrow circle of experience and acquaintance. In the camp, however, he was a master ; there was nothing that he did not know about camp life, and he was always ready to help us out of any difficulties, although, as I very soon learnt, he had the profoundest contempt for Algy and myself, whom he looked upon as ignorant " Silvertails." It was sometimes rather difficult, during our long and close companionship of five months in the wilds, to keep from quarrelling with Low, but fortunately both Algy and myself had a considerable store of patience and, besides that, a sufficient sense of humour to make us understand that although we were " silvertails " we were nevertheless the apprentices at this job and he was the master.

Next came Anderson, a grey-haired, bald-headed, rather stout old Swede, who had been for years in Australia and thought there was nothing in the world to compare with it. He was the Fidus Achates of Low, and took every word of his for gospel. From the first he made up his mind that South Africa was no country for him. He

used to drop his "h's," though where he had learnt this, being a Swede, I can't understand. In all our long peregrinations together, we of course used to discuss South African affairs at enormous length over the camp-fire, and old Anderson, like a Greek chorus at the end, would always sum up the situation by saying: "Well, it's an 'orrible bloody country, anyhow." His idea of happiness was to strike a nugget, which he would naturally keep for himself, and then go home to Calgary, or wherever it was that his friends lived in Australia, go to the nearest pub and "shout" for those friends and anybody that happened to come in at the time, which meant treating them to unlimited whisky. This was the object of his journey to South Africa; perhaps it was as well for him that we found no nuggets. He was by no means so useful as Low.

Thirdly, there was Turnbull, a fine old Scot who came from Tweedside and had been an ardent salmon poacher in his day. He was really a keen sportsman; it was in his blood. He used to tell me that he had been caught and convicted more than once, but he had a great respect and almost affection for Lord John Scott, who was the magistrate before whom he had often appeared, and who was also, I presume, the inventor of the famous Jock Scott fly. He respected him because, as he said, Lord John was a true sportsman and, recognising in him (Turnbull) a fellow spirit, always gave him the lightest sentence that the law would permit. On one occasion when we were up-country, Turnbull and I were stalking a couple of remarkably fine roan antelopes. He was in front of me; we were crawling along on our stomachs, and the dust that he made with his boots got into my nose and made me sneeze. He turned upon me with a face of fury and said: "If you do that again I'll shoot ye," and, upon my word, I believe he would have done it. He was an excellent and valuable old fellow, and also helpful about the camp, but he was not a patch on Low for resourcefulness.

Finally there was Mr. Fox, or Mr. Fawkes, as Anderson

always called him. He was despised and always referred to with contempt by the others because he had been a schoolmaster in New Zealand, and was therefore considered to be a useless product of a refined and effete civilisation. He was a kindly and well-mannered person, but almost useless in camp life and, I should say, quite ignorant of prospecting. He, however, made himself useful by looking after the stores and keeping accounts, a thing which I have always hated doing.

It did not take Algy and me long to draw up a very simple contract of partnership with these four strangely assorted musketeers. So far as I remember, it was my business to finance the whole show up to Mashonaland, and during the time we were actually prospecting for gold. If we failed to discover any, which failure, according to reports that were coming down from Mashonaland, seemed likely, I was to provide them with means to get to the coast, after which they were to look after themselves. With Low's help we also drew up a list of most of the things we required for the journey. I submitted the result to Rudd before we signed. He entirely approved of it, and even went so far as to say that he thought ours was one of the most promising expeditions he had heard of that year. I think he must have meant me to take this with a grain of salt, but at that time I was distinctly pleased and flattered.

The next fortnight or so was spent in making preparations at the Cape, Algy dealing with the four wild men from Australia, while I went about with my mother to different places round Cape Town, such as Constantia, and that part of the road round Table Mountain which was then complete, etc. It was a very pleasant time that I spent with her, and we had made so many friends of one sort or another that I felt that I could leave her at the Cape with an easy conscience. The only thing that she criticised rather severely was the food at the boarding-house, though she was indeed no epicure. She always said that it seemed to be made up entirely of the

insides and ends of animals, and she couldn't understand what was done at the Cape with the carcasses. I never discovered any solution to this enigma. Wherever I went, in the boarding-houses and hotels, I was always fed on heads, tails and trotters.

The next time Rhodes invited me to dine we were almost alone, and he gave me a sketch of his ideas as to the lines along which the Empire should develop. A tremendous believer in the force of British character and of its fundamental love of liberty, he was strongly opposed to anything like centralisation. The interference of Downing Street in the affairs of the great Colonies, as South Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand then were, was to him as much anathema as it was to my friend Low, the prospector, though for different reasons. He was very decided in declaring that the time had come for these countries, which would before long be called upon to play a considerable part in world affairs, to run their own business, rightly or wrongly, without being told how to do it by Governments in London which completely changed their tone and their policy every five years in accordance with the views of the Party which elected them. This, he declared, would only possibly lead to the break-up of the Empire before very long. It was a source of continual vexation, and it must be removed. He then sketched out what he believed to be the only plan by which the British Empire could continue to exist, and this—which I look back upon as having been a vision of the future of an extraordinarily far-sighted prophet in political affairs—was almost precisely what has actually taken place. The complete internal autonomy, at any rate, of the countries now known as the Dominions which were to have that which is now known as Dominion status ; in fact, the Empire would become a loose Confederation of English-speaking States, having certain common interests and common objects : peace, law and order, economic development, the further civilising of backward parts of the world, which he, with his intense belief in British efficiency, held should gradually, in the

main, come into this British constellation of States, and, for the rest, friendship with the outside world generally, provided—and this was the snag—that the outside world did not interfere too much with his ideas. That was the trouble, in his opinion, with Portugal at that time: an inefficient and corrupt country, according to him, which, while others were asleep, had acquired vast portions of the surface of the world, which it was entirely unable properly to develop.

In thinking over this subsequently, it was rather amusing to me to realise that these were almost exactly the same arguments which were being used by Treitschke in Berlin with regard to England, and had such enormous influence over German thought after 1870. It is possible that these arguments have not been totally forgotten even by the Nazi youth of our day.

Rhodes then went on to talk of the Irish question, which, in his opinion, was one of the great dangers for the future of the Empire. He saw, as Sir Robert Hamilton saw, that the policy of the English Government towards Ireland would be likely to change with every turn of the political wheel; that it was impossible to govern a country on these lines, and that in the future the Irish Nationalist Party would probably always hold the balance between Liberal and Conservative at Westminster, and make what is in America called "a Yankee trade" with each, as might best serve their own interests. Further he saw that, in the long run, the people of England would not stand for coercion, and that attempts at prolonged coercion—what Lord Salisbury called "twenty years of resolute government"—would have a deplorable effect on the relations of Great Britain with the United States of America, a good understanding with which was essential for the development of the Empire along the lines he believed in.

I cannot of course remember the words he used, but this was the general impression left on my mind, and it came nearer to prophecy on a grand scale than anything else I can ever recollect to have heard. Nearly

everything he foresaw has come true. He filled me with enthusiasm for his views, which included, among other things, a preferential tariff amongst the component parts of the Empire. This also I have lived to see.

When he spoke about these things it was almost as an inspired prophet, and he lost that hard, somewhat material look which was generally predominant in his face. His eyes always had the dreamy expression of a visionary, but when he spoke of the future of the Empire his whole face seemed to change. It is no wonder that he carried me by storm in those days, and convinced me of the practical value of most of his ideas, to which I have adhered ever since.

There is one, however, of his pet themes which I have never been able to digest, and that was the absurd Nietzschean doctrine of a superiority of the Nordic races. I had already, in those days, become convinced that the Latins and Celts possessed certain qualities of the mind and of the spirit which were largely lacking in the British and in the German Nordic make-up. All indeed appeared to me complementary of the others, and I have only grown with years more firmly fixed in the belief that there is nothing more fatuous in international affairs than to believe in the unquestioned superiority of one's own people and the inferiority of others.

The day came for our departure. I went ahead of the others, travelling up to Kimberley by train and sharing a compartment with Colonel Sir Frederick Carrington, of the British Bechuanaland Police. He was an excellent fellow and a very brave soldier, having the appearance of a typical swashbuckler, with magnificent long moustachios. He was in his proper place as a frontier policeman, provided always he had somebody like Sir Henry Loch, the Governor of the Cape, to keep him in order. He was of course intimately acquainted with the conditions along the Bechuanaland frontier of the Transvaal, and gave me most useful hints about our journey.

Apart from the intense interest of the landscape as we went up, one incident struck me as exceptionally curious. That year there were on the high veld of Cape Colony vast swarms of locusts. Millions of these had settled in one place on the railway line where it climbed a slight incline ; they appeared to be unable to rise as the train advanced, with the result that they were crushed under the wheels, and the grease in their bodies caused the rails to become so slippery that the wheels of the engine turned without moving forward, and we were, apparently, indefinitely blocked. Many people had to get out of the train and sweep the line in front of the engine, so as to enable it to proceed until we had passed through the swarm of locusts. Later also, when we got to Kimberley we were persecuted by these locusts, which were so thick that they literally darkened the sky. One afternoon I went out riding with a friend, and we had to turn back because they kept on striking us in the face with such force that it was really unpleasant. The races at Kimberley, which I attended, had almost to be stopped because the ground was so covered with locusts that the horses, as they went round, became invisible in a cloud of them, and two or three animals, stepping on the slimy, greasy bodies, broke their legs and had to be shot.

The locusts followed us from time to time in our trek up-country, and I particularly remember one moonlight night going over a pass in the Megaliesberg mountains, where the branches of the trees on either side of the road were weighted down with the mass of locusts, on whose wings and bodies the moonlight glittered, presenting a most weird and sinister picture. As our wagon moved along, masses of these creatures were swept into the tent of the wagon, and their bodies and different parts of them seemed to fill the wagon and also the cart which followed, so that almost all our clothes and bedding, and all our food for about a week afterwards, contained legs and wings and heads of these disgusting insects. We never attempted, like St. John the Baptist, to make them an article of food.

Having bought three horses in Kimberley and various stores, I went up to Vryburg, which was then the railhead, to buy a half-tented wagon, a tented two-wheeled cart, the eighteen oxen necessary to draw these two vehicles, and to make final arrangements for the journey up. I also hired a Kaffir to drive the wagon, another driver for the cart, and a Hottentot Voorlooper, who led the oxen of the wagon when we were on the march. Algy Caulfeild and the four prospectors met me at Vryburg. I had letters to one or two leading men there, who helped me to get all that I needed.

It was a bright, keen autumn morning when our party started off for the North. The oxen began almost racing across the veldt, and Algy and I on our horses galloped about in high spirits ; it seemed such a glorious beginning. It was not, however, destined to last long on that level ; only a few miles out of Vryburg we came across an innocent-looking spruit with very little water running in it, while the black mud on the farther side looked quite firm and dry. The oxen got across all right, but no sooner did the front wheels of the wagon touch the wet mud than they went in over the axles. We outspanned the oxen of the cart and hitched them on to the wagon, making eighteen in all ; both drivers shouted and cracked their whips, and we added to the din, but nothing would make the wagon budge an inch. We had to off-load all our stores and carry them across on our backs before we could get the wagon clear of the spruit. So far as I can remember, this trifling spruit of not more than, I should think, five or six yards across, took us something like four to five hours to pass. This was our first experience of the difficulties of travelling with a wagon in Africa, and gave us an idea of the time that our journey of something like eleven hundred miles was likely to take. We were considerably cast down by this adventure, but next morning, having repacked everything again, and the sun being bright and the good air of the high veld as keen and vivifying as ever, our spirits returned and we trundled

along at racing speed, making, I should think, almost four miles an hour.

There is no necessity to go into any long description of that road which was travelled by so many pioneers before us, passing through Mafeking, which was afterwards to become famous for its siege, cutting through a bit of the Transvaal—which we did at night, for fear of being stopped by the authorities of the South African Republic and made to pay duty—touching Palapswe, the Bechuanaland capital, and Tuli, one of the newly-founded camps of the Chartered Company Police, trekking for a number of days along what Kipling, I think, calls “the great, grey-green, greasy Limpopo river,” *alias* the Crocodile river, where a little incident occurred which was useful to Algy and myself in raising our prestige in the eyes of Low, Anderson and Turnbull. We were camped not far from the river and were resting the animals for a day; the Hottentot boy took them down to drink, and one of our best oxen seeing, I suppose, some good-looking pasture on the other shore, took it into its head to swim across. We couldn’t afford to lose an ox at that moment; the river, although it was the dry season, seemed to be about as broad as the Thames at Staines, and was running pretty strong, but what was much worse was that there were the spoor of crocodiles in considerable numbers on the muddy bank. Algy said to me: “There’s nothing else to be done: we’ve got to swim over and get that beast back.” I frankly disliked the job, but if anyone was to do it, it was obvious that it must be Algy and I for the excellent reason that we were the only members of the party that could swim. We therefore stripped and, seeing a crocodile in every log that came floating down, entered the water, splashing about as much as we could to frighten off any possible attack. We crossed all right, rounded up our ox, hunted him back into the water in a very short time, and brought him safely across, to our own immense surprise and satisfaction. Our Australians gave us a cheer as we landed, and there was a change in Low’s attitude from

that moment. He felt that "silvertails" might, after all, be good for something.

Moving north from the Limpopo river, we arrived in due course at Port Victoria, a camp of the Chartered Company Police, which was within a few miles of Zimbabwe, the curious ruins of some race which had disappeared, and had evidently built themselves these temples and fortifications as a centre for their gold-mining industry. It was supposed at that time that this district might have been the centre of the gold-mines of the Queen of Sheba, but that theory has long since been exploded, although I believe no certain solution of the problem as to the origin of the builders of Zimbabwe has yet been discovered. The ruins were at that time being explored by Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Bent, to whom I had letters of introduction from friends in England. Algy and I therefore left the wagons at Fort Victoria and rode out to Zimbabwe, where we spent a couple of nights with the Bents. The ruins were full of interest more on account of the mystery that surrounded them, perhaps, than of their actual importance. They have been fully described by Theodore Bent in his book on the subject, and by several other writers, and it is unnecessary for me to attempt a description here. The two things, however, which I vividly remember were the round tower in the valley, somewhat like the Irish round towers, built of stone bricks without mortar, and the great eagle-headed stones standing up over the walls of the fort which defended the kopje above, and was clearly used as a laboratory for smelting gold. There was something so weird and mysterious about these buildings, which had stood there for centuries without having been seen by any eyes except those of natives and some Portuguese hunters, who had preserved the tradition of their existence, that I remember few archæological remains that have ever given me quite the same thrill. Those of the Mayas in Central America, when first discovered in the tropical jungle, must have produced a very similar effect.

Somewhere near Victoria, Algy and I spent a night trying to get a lion. There were numbers of them all round us ; every night when we camped on the way up we heard them continually, but never saw one. A short distance off the road we discovered a dead mule which had been partially devoured, and we thought that the lion would certainly come back the next evening. So we halted for the night, built a sort of scherm or shelter of logs between ourselves and the mule, the direction from which we expected the lion to come. We lay down with our loaded rifles beside us and waited. It was a clear moonlight night and very still ; the only thing that disturbed us was that the air was somewhat perfumed by the mule. Hour after hour passed, and finally in the early hours of the morning we both fell asleep. How long we slept I don't know, but both of us woke with a jump and seized our rifles when we heard some creature snuffling and growling at our heels, which were of course undefended. We thought our last moment had come, but on springing up we found nothing more dangerous than two lean and apparently starving Kaffir dogs. It was no doubt lucky for us that no lion turned up that night, for it would certainly have been difficult to find in the length and breadth of Africa two *shikaris* less competent to meet lions in the way, whether rampant, gardant or merely passant, than Algy and I at that time.

We did very little big-game shooting on the way up, being most anxious to press on, for our time in Mashonaland was necessarily growing short ; our oxen were getting very leg-weary and by now could hardly go more than four or five miles a day ; some had died on the way up, and we had been obliged to buy extra ones from Boer transport riders travelling south with empty wagons. We used to go out guinea-fowl shooting at sunset for the pot, and that was about all the sport we could indulge in. Our regular habit of travel was as follows :

Rising two hours before sunrise, we had some black

coffee and biscuits; the oxen, who were inspanned during the night, were ready to move at once, and in a quarter of an hour we were on the march. We continued thus till about two hours after sunrise, when the sun began to get hot; then the oxen were outspanned and sent off to graze under the care of our Kaffirs, while we prepared our breakfast, which was generally composed of mealie meal porridge, tinned beef, bread made with cream of tartar, which was baked by Low, jam and very strong tea. After a pipe or two we lay down and slept till about two in the afternoon; then the oxen were brought back again and inspanned. We had another meal very much like our breakfast at about three, and two hours before sunset we started again and continued plodding along by the side of the wagon, for we had given up riding by this time altogether, the horses being simply tied on behind. About half-past seven or eight we stopped for a short evening meal, got our mackintosh sheets, rugs and pillows laid out on the flattest piece of ground we could find, built three or four fires round the camp to keep off lions, boiled our coffee which, with bread and jam, formed our supper, and after a pipe or two and long arguments about all kinds of matters, political, mining, religious—in fact everything we could think of—we used to turn in and sleep soundly on the ground under the brilliant stars of the South African night until it was time to be off again next morning.

These arguments of ours were often heated, especially the religious and political ones. In religion and politics Low was a fanatic atheist and anarchist—"down with everything" was his motto. The British Empire and churches of any kind were his pet aversions. It was useless for me to point out that without the British Empire he would never have been born in his beloved Sydney. That did not affect the issue for him, which was that Australia ought to cut the painter, the sooner the better, and set up a real democratic republic in which there should be no silvertails and distinction of classes. The

only person of any official standing I ever heard him say a good word for was old Lady Robinson, the wife of Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of New South Wales, because on one occasion when a horse she had backed at a race-meeting won after an exciting finish, she tore her bonnet from her head and flung it into the air—no easy thing to do with a Victorian bonnet. “She was a good old sport, anyway,” said Low.

Our long religious wrangles were curious. Low was the militant atheist whose Bible was the *Martyrdom of Man*, by Winwood Reade, a tattered copy of which he always kept with him. He never failed to find some passage in it that would prove to his satisfaction the wickedness of all churches and creeds. I read it, and was at that time much struck by the ability of the presentation of his case by the author. I have never come across it since, but have heard that it is one of the books that the Soviet Government has had translated into Russian and distributed for the benefit of the faithful.

Anderson, of course, backed Low up in all his most extravagant attacks.

Old Turnbull, like a good old Scottish Lowlander, sat quiet and held his tongue, though I fancy the foundation of his Presbyterian upbringing did not allow him to approve of Low's sarcasms against the Bible and all devout books. Mr. Fox, the ex-schoolmaster, tried to defend Anglican orthodoxy, but was no match for Low.

While arguing strongly according to my sincere convictions that the Universe without a Creator was simply unthinkable, and that my own intuitive sense led me to believe in an after life, I took up, as regards creeds and churches a purely agnostic position, which was then my genuine attitude towards them, while doing my best to point out the good done by many religious bodies. Algy, whom I suspected of leanings towards Catholicism, sat and silently smiled at the crudeness of our reasoning.

Natural history was another favourite subject of discussion, and I started one night a heated argument with

old Anderson by asking if there were any tarantulas in tropical Africa.

"What are they?" asked Anderson.

"Large, venomous, hairy spiders," said I.

"Tarantulas!" exclaimed he, with contempt for my ignorance. "Tarantelopes, you mean."

I replied with some heat that he was talking nonsense. He said that, anyhow, he had seen lots in Australia, and they were called tarantelopes there, and he appealed to Low to confirm this. Low's eyes twinkled, but he could not let his fidus Achates down, and he said he believed they were so called. Mr. Fox, from the pedestal of superior learning, backed me up, which particularly incensed Anderson.

"What do you know about it, anyhow? You've never been to Australia where they live. Low and I have seen them there. As to Africa, I don't know what they're called here. It's only an 'orrible bloody country, any'ow."

That settled it.

I look back on those curious nightly dialogues with much enjoyment. Considering their occasional ferocity it seems little short of miraculous that, living as we did cheek by jowl for about five months, we never came to any serious breach. We learnt to tolerate each other because we early realised that we all had need of each other, and in retrospect it has often seemed to me that I took in those few months a Degree in the art of living, and in the knowledge of human nature, which as many years at Oxford or Cambridge, or indeed any University, could never have conferred upon me.

Low taught me that the only hope of success in argument with a fanatic lies in patience and good temper. He also taught me that it is useless to expect any sort of sense of patriotism or pride in the history of people or country from those who have, rightly or wrongly, a deep sense of injustice from birth and are congenitally embittered. To expect such individuals to be enthusiastic about, let us say, the British Empire, is like expecting grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. It is not generally

their fault that they are thorns or thistles. It is rather the fault of their surroundings, and if they are to be cured of that bitterness which is truly an illness, it is the business of those who can do so to improve their surroundings. Those who blame a casual labourer in Dockland because he doesn't burst out into an ecstasy of song at the sight of the Union Jack, are unfortunately incapable of inspiring the right kind of patriotism. They are too apt to grow righteously indignant over a docker's lack of patriotic virtue, and to forget that the sort of perfervid patriotism to be found in the pages of the *Saturday Review* is with difficulty obtainable apart from good meals and a comfortable bed. The French have a saying: "*Ventre affamé n'a pas d'oreille.*" This, like most aphorisms, is only partly true, but it is certainly generally a fact that *ventre affamé* is unlikely to have any *oreille* for the abstract, whether love of country, or religion or art. To that extent we must recognise that we are the slaves of material things.

Old Anderson taught me that it is not difficult to suffer fools gladly, if one regards them as court jesters.

Turnbull taught me that an old poacher can be a good sportsman and a thoroughly decent fellow, while poor Mr. Fox made me listen with respect while he soared among the platitudes of the higher morality, for he was, although a highbrow, willing and ready to do any kind of "chores" about the camp.

So, curiously picked a society as we were, we got on remarkably well together. It was, however, very pleasant when some other travellers, transport riders or pioneers going up to Mashonaland to take up farms, joined our camp fires for a night or two and varied the programme of small talk.

We reached Fort Salisbury, the then capital of the Chartered Company, when the winter dry season was well advanced, somewhere about the middle of August. The reports we had heard from men who were leaving the country made us all decide not to spend a wet season there. The last wet season had been apparently disastrous.

There had not been enough supplies and it had been almost impossible to get the necessary food in over impassable roads. This had resulted in something like a famine, and fever had been rampant.

The reports of gold also were not encouraging. All this caused Anderson to shake his head wisely and repeat his favourite refrain, while none of us except Algy, who said he could not go home yet, felt inclined to face famine and fever with deluges of rain for six months and no prospect of finding gold.

All the same after inquiring about the best area for prospecting I decided that I would sell the wagon, scotch cart and oxen and buy four donkeys, with which Low, Anderson, Turnbull and I would set out into the wilds along the banks of the Umsweswe River. I bought the donkeys which were the only possible form of transport in the tsetse fly region to which we were going, and we loaded them up with our bedding and food for about six weeks, leaving Algy and Mr. Fox to sell wagons, oxen and horses and such supplies as we didn't want.

I felt my party and I were really plunging into the unknown this time. Up to now we had followed the fairly well worked track of the pioneer expedition of the previous year, but now we had only a small, very sketchy, map and the sun and stars to guide us.

This was the moment when Low became really useful, and he quickly assumed the rôle of captain of the band while I became the donkey driver. This last was far from easy in the bush as the rascals would never keep in file and were always rubbing their packs off against tree trunks or against each other. Our trekking hours were much the same as before, we had to ration our food strictly and to take in our belts. The donkeys had to be tethered together at night and we slept round them to guard them from lions which were more numerous than ever and particularly fond of donkey meat. Of course, round our camping-ground we had to build large fires which required constant replenishing during the night:

I think we trekked for about a week or ten days before we came to the so-called gold-bearing area near the Umsweswe. We then camped for two or three days at a time here and there on the banks of the river. The three prospectors went out daily and collected quartz specimens which they afterwards crushed and washed, but without ever finding gold in anything like payable quantities. I kept the camp, cooked and guarded the donkeys while they grazed, their forelegs being tied together to prevent their straying too far. When one or more of the prospectors came back to camp early enough in the afternoon I used to take my gun and go out after guinea fowl which always came down to the river to drink before sunset.

One evening I was just turning back to our camp disconsolately, having had no luck, when I saw another fellow as rough-looking as myself, for I was then a genuine backwoodsman, coming towards me. He had three guinea fowl hanging over his shoulder. Here was a person not to be despised, for our stock of food was short. I naturally accosted him and asked him where he was going. He said he had rather lost his way and didn't know if he could reach his camp before sunset. Though he looked a rough customer his speech was that of a gentleman and his guinea fowls were appetising, so I at once invited him to our camp for the night which he gladly accepted.

We then asked each other from what part of England we respectively came, and to my surprise and delight I found that he was one of the Dykes of Dovenby Hall in Cumberland whom I had often met both in the hunting-field and at village cricket matches. We had a good Cumberland "crack" over our pipes that night after the three guinea fowl had been successfully disposed of.

Another casual meeting in the bush on our way home led to a friendship that has lasted till now. My party was trekking back to Fort Salisbury, having found nothing to encourage us in pegging out claims, when we

met a young Scottish engineer with a golden moustache and blue eyes, a slim, wiry frame, and a good Aberdeen accent. He was one of those with whom one was compelled to make friends at once. We travelled a good deal of the road back to Cape Town together. For many years we saw little of each other, but from time to time I heard of the great things he was doing in Africa, building railways across the continent, developing the great Katanga copper mines, etc. One morning at breakfast-time, just after I had arrived in Washington as Ambassador, in 1924, a card was brought to me—"Sir Robert Williams"—my old friend of the Umsweswe River. I asked him at once to come and stay with me, though the house was in complete disorder, but he had to get back to New York that day. However, we had a great talk at breakfast. He told me he had been lunching the day before with the "J. P. Morgan crowd" in New York, and they had asked him if he knew the new Ambassador.

"Rather," he answered, "we first met humping our own swags in the bush in Mashonaland in 1891."

Since I have returned to England from the United States I have many times tried to catch one of Bob Williams's salmon in the Dee, but so far without success. He is a great man for controlling natives but has no control over his own salmon.

Bob Williams became one of Rhodes's right-hand men, because, in the days of Rhodes's greatness, he did not fear to stand up to him. On him more than on any other man has fallen the mantle of Rhodes as the developer of British Central Africa, and there is probably no one living who knows the inner history of Rhodes's last years so well as he. It is to be hoped that he will publish his memories of those days and give us a living picture of that extraordinary man which no biography I have yet read has quite succeeded in doing.

The Australians and I managed to get back to Salisbury just before we had finished our supplies. I had lost none of the donkeys. This was, I think, probably the one

really great achievement of my life, and I was a proud pioneer indeed when I drove them up to where Fox and Algy were camping. The latter had not wasted time. The wagon and oxen had been well sold, also the horses.

Having to complete some financial transactions before clearing out of the country I gave our four prospectors sufficient funds to reach Durban in accordance with our previous arrangements and stayed on for some days more in Salisbury before starting for Umtali and Beira, the port in Portuguese East Africa from which all who did not take the overland route to the Cape were obliged to sail. Algy also left at once for Umtali where he had got a job in the hospital which interested him much.

I stayed a week or ten days in Salisbury and arranged to travel down to the coast with Captain Chanley Turner, a Westmorland man who was temporarily leaving the Chartered Company's police on sick leave, and Auguste Poulin, a French trader and big game hunter, who had spent many years in those parts, and with whom I had made friends. While staying at Salisbury I saw something of Dr. Jameson, who was staying with the Administrator of Mashonaland, Mr. Harris, who was as unpopular as Dr. Jameson was generally liked. Dr. Jim was one of those men who had the gift of attracting all those whom he came across.

Among other personalities at Salisbury at that time was Lord Randolph Churchill. He had come out to South Africa for his health and it was even then clear that he was very unwell. He was no longer the keen, brilliant man who could deliver rapier thrusts at the Grand Old Man across the floor of the House of Commons. He made himself disagreeable to all, and the only thing I can remember his saying one night when we were dining with Jameson, together with Harris and a number of Chartered Company officers, was not calculated to endear him to those present. He had been running down Sir Henry Holland, who was Conservative Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Jameson said, perhaps rather pointedly, that he was at least always courteous and pleasant to deal with. Randolph Churchill, glowering at Jameson, retorted: "Yes, he has a charming bedside manner." Sir Henry's grandfather had been, I believe, physician to George III, but the venom lay in the allusion to Jameson's own profession.

We dined in a tin shanty such as every building in Salisbury consisted of at that time, sat on packing-cases for chairs, and ate off a trestle-table with an oilskin-paper cloth. Our food was tough trek ox and potatoes and bread, and our drink was whisky and tepid water which poor Randolph hated. The only thing he cared for was champagne.

Later, when he returned to Cape Town, after having, in his letters to the *Daily Graphic*, written down Mashonaland and everything connected with it, he stayed for some time with Rhodes. I met him again there at dinner when he looked more out of tune with life than even at Salisbury.

Someone asked him how he could put up at Rhodes's house after all he had written to the Press.

"My dear fellow," he replied, "it's the only place in this God-forsaken country where I can get Perrier Jouet '74," or whatever the date of his favourite vintage was.

I repeat the story for what it is worth as it was told to me. I felt truly sorry for Randolph Churchill then, for he seemed to be a man who knew he was finished. He was completely changed from the brilliant young man whom I had met only a few years before at the Viceroyal Lodge, Dublin, who seemed to have the world at his feet.

He was very ill, but he had also "forgotten Goschen" when he resigned the Chancellorship of the Exchequer just as Napoleon is said to have declared after Waterloo that he had forgotten Cr cy and Agincourt.

Turner, Poulin and I drove to Umtali, a small settlement and camp of the Chartered Company on the Portuguese frontier. Here I saw Algy Caulfeild for the

last time for many years. He was engaged in looking after a ward in the very primitive hospital which was already, before the wet season had even begun, commencing to fill with fever patients, so he had his hands full. He gave me a graphic description of how he had steeplechased over the beds of the fever patients after a patient who had developed delirium tremens with whom he had a tremendous struggle before he could get him out of the ward.

He took everything that came as part of the day's work and took it smiling. He would find humour of a grim sort in an incident of this kind. I was very sorry to say good-bye to him in such surroundings, but he showed no sign of any fear for the future. He left Mashonaland the following year and returned to England. His mechanical turn inspired him later to start a motor factory near Southampton, which was for a time a great success, and he made many motor-boats for the Government during the War. He also, I don't know how, got interested in oil companies in Polish Galicia and for some time was making a large income which he spent mainly on hospital work. In fact, his start in the Umtali Hospital gave him a lifelong interest in hospitals, so much so, that long after he lost all his fortune as a result of the War, he went on working at one of the London hospitals on investigations into the origin of cancer.

I used to see him from time to time at the Travellers' Club, when he would tell me of his activities among unfortunate guinea-pigs and mice. In good or evil fortune he was always the same reliable, intelligent, hard-working, humorous, kindly friend, and the news of his death in 1933 came to me as a great shock. R.I.P.

At Umtali, Turner, Poulin and I collected native carriers to take our belongings and food supply down to the coast. These, like all natives, they carried on their heads and, as far as I can remember, every package had to be made up not to exceed 40 lb. We had a good deal of stuff to carry between us, and needed a gang of some twenty "boys." They were a light-hearted,

irresponsible lot, but Poulin could talk to them in their own language and his French capacity for getting on with natives made things easy. Only one or two deserted us on our two hundred mile march down to Beira. The first night was spent at Massi Kessi, an abandoned Portuguese fort where I slept for the first time for months under a roof and thoroughly disliked it, but this was partly because we slept on a cement floor with nothing between it and our bodies but a rug. I much preferred the broad if uneven bosom of Mother Earth as a bed.

Once, on the way down through the tropical forests into which, after leaving the high veld we had now entered, Turner and I caught sight of a family of lions, father, mother, and three cubs, crossing the path about a hundred and fifty yards ahead, but we had no time to get in a shot and tried in vain to come up with them again in the bush.

One feature of this travel on foot through the African tropical forest struck me especially and explained to me how it was comparatively easy for natives to travel hundreds of miles to the mines at Kimberley or Johannesburg. Everywhere these forests were intersected by hard-beaten native paths leading from one native kraal to another and on them, in the dry season at least, walking was quite comfortable.

About three days out of Massi Kessi, when we were well in Portuguese territory, we noted a large village high up on a hill. We needed fresh food for ourselves and our bearers, so all three of us, with one or two boys carrying calico and beads to pay for what we could get, climbed the long, steep hill in a blazing sun. Poulin, knowing the ropes, spread our wares out at the entrance of the main street of the village and then began, like a regular pedlar, calling out what we had to sell.

Some natives arrived but never offered to do business, and indeed looked at us with some contempt, which exasperated us after our hot climb up. This went on for some time till Poulin, irritated beyond bearing, suddenly

put up his rifle and shot a goat which was grazing on the far side from the village. This was the signal for a general *saute qui peut* in the village. Howling women caught up their children, and their husbands dragged them away—a scene of terrific confusion and hullabaloo. We shot another goat, rounded up a few chickens, took about a dozen fresh eggs, left on the stones where they had been originally displayed enough calico and beads to cover the value of the foodstuffs thus somewhat cavalierly bought, and made our way down to our camp where our bearers greeted us with yells of delight when they saw the goats. Two days later we came across a Portuguese camp of coloured soldiers under the command of a charming captain, called, I think, de Bettencourt, who, after examining our papers and finding that Poulin and I spoke French, invited us all to dinner that night. We had a very pleasant dinner with excellent Portuguese wines. After dinner he asked if we had come across a lot of rascally English who had been looting villages some way farther up the road and terrorising the inhabitants, even shooting the livestock. He would, he said, much like to catch and put them in irons and send them down to the coast. Poulin at once answered that we had not met or heard of any party guilty of such practices, but that if anything of the kind should come to his ears he would not fail to let our host know. I held my peace, not feeling called upon to turn informer. Turner did not understand what had been said but quite agreed, after we had told him, that we had better strike camp and be off long before cockcrow next morning. It is strange how short a time it requires in the wilds to drop the most elementary rules of civilised conduct—necessity knows no law.

Some days farther on we got into a wonderful country for game. The forest was intersected by large, open grass plains or vleis, literally covered with big game of all kinds. At one time I am sure it was possible to see two or three thousand head of animals. Buffaloes, zebra, waterbuck, gnu (wildebeest), hartebeest, roan antelope and many

other kinds. A few years later the rinderpest spread among these herds and, I believe, now there is scarcely any big game to be found there.

Turner and I decided we must stop some days here to get at least a buffalo head or two, while the meat was much appreciated by our carriers.

We each got three, I think. The first two Turner and I got at the same time out of a herd we met in the forest. The second, however, was the most exciting stalk I have ever had in my life. I was out alone with my special carrier and had just shot a warthog when, on entering a slight opening in the wood, my native whispered hoarsely : "*Inyáti, Baas, inyáti lápa*"—"Buffalo, Baas, buffalo there." Sure enough, facing me about a hundred yards off was a great solitary old bull looking straight at me. These are always said to be the most dangerous beasts in Africa. I had only a small bore Martini rifle, the cartridges of which almost invariably stuck after being fired so that it took about two to five minutes to extract them, and it was not a double-barrelled rifle, so I had but one cartridge to depend on. But here was the great head I was hoping for, and I felt it was a time to take risks. So I aimed in the centre of the beast's body, feeling that my best chance with so small a bullet was to rake him fore and aft. This I must have done for he was evidently grievously wounded, and turned slowly round moving heavily into some low scrub. Now was the dangerous moment. Many were the stories I had heard of wounded buffaloes waiting for the hunters, and charging them unexpectedly when followed up. My "boy" hung back, clinging to the shelter of trees up which he would have climbed like a monkey if necessary. We went slowly and warily forward when suddenly I heard a hoarse whisper behind me, "*Lápa, Baas, lápa,*" and, looking in the direction in which the black finger pointed I saw the horns and the back of the old bull moving slowly through some high grass about eighty yards away. He was broadside on so, though I could only see the top of his back and his horns, I aimed at where I thought his heart

ought to be and must have hit the bull's-eye for he fell with a great crash.

My "boy" gave a shout of triumph and rushed up to the carcass, and before I came up he had the beast's stomach open and was cutting off tit-bits from inside, coming out smoking and green from the grass in the old bull's stomach, looking so strange an object that I, with the sudden release from the extreme tension of the last few minutes, burst into long and loud laughter.

We had some other interesting and, to us, amusing adventures with lions, of which we never shot one, buffaloes and buck, with regard to which latter I had no success, but these stalks are all as like to each other as stalks of straw and there is no reason to dwell on them.

Two little incidents of our walk down to the coast I cannot leave unnoticed. At one of our shooting camps we were joined by the newly-appointed Anglican Bishop of Mashonaland, Knight-Bruce, a very agreeable and very sporting cleric. He had a negro servant called "John" who went everywhere with him and carried his rifle. One morning when I was going out to find the head of a buffalo I had shot the evening before the Bishop said he would come with me, but wouldn't shoot as he only shot to get meat for his men. I noticed that John nevertheless carried rifle and cartridges. It was not long before we came to a great vlei, or open grassland, covered with hundreds of animals of all descriptions. The Bishop gave me advice as to what to make for and how to get a shot. He was clearly an expert. Presently John said: "My lord, there's a beautiful waterbuck over there to the right." "Nonsense, John," said the Bishop, "I'm not shooting this morning." John drew his attention three or four times to beautiful heads. The poor Bishop resisted temptation as long as he could, but finally he fell. Angrily, as to someone who had done him a wrong, he said, "Give me my rifle, John," and plumping down on all-fours began making his way towards some "beautiful head." He bagged it, of course, and entirely forgave John.

I was amused, but being then, I regret to say, a keen if unsuccessful head-hunter, I quite understood the Bishop's inability to resist such a feast of temptation as was spread out before us on that vlei.

Finally, the other incident. One day, on the march, we came across an old fellow stumping up-country with one wooden leg. He carried all his belongings, a thick walking-stick, a few pounds of flour, coffee and sugar, some tobacco, matches and a rag to cover him at night. He was a broad, stocky, elderly man of about sixty, with a flaming red beard and hair. His clothes were almost in rags and he looked as if he hadn't washed for weeks. As we were going to halt for breakfast he agreed to join us. He told us he was going up to Salisbury on business and snapped his fingers at prospective famine and fever. He knew this country and could look after himself. We asked what he did if he met a lion. He said: "I swear at them in Dutch. No lion can stand that." After breakfast we gave him some food supplies for his journey up and watched him stumping his way through the primeval woods to fever, famine and lions.

I asked a friend who followed us down if he had met a strange old fellow with a wooden leg. He said: "No, but we did come across a little abandoned camp, with the ashes of recent fires, a walking-stick, a billy (tin pot), some bags of coffee, flour, etc., and a wooden leg with torn clothes beside it." So at last the old fellow's Dutch oaths had not saved him from the jaws of a lion.

What sort of a man was this? What was his object in tramping to Salisbury alone, when all others were leaving in haste? What was his past history? Was that wooden leg of his a twin brother of the sinister wooden leg of Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*, and would it have joined in the chorus:

Fifteen men on the Dead Man's Chest,
Yo, ho! ho! and a bottle of Rum.
Drink and the Devil have done for the rest,
Yo, ho! ho! and a bottle of Rum—

or was it of a less romantic kind, like that to which Mrs. Gamp referred when she said :

“ And, as to ’usbands, I remember a wooden leg which for going down into wine cellars and not coming up till dragged by main force was as weak as ’uman flesh, if not weaker ? ” Who can tell ? But had I found that poor wooden leg derelict between two spent camp-fires I would have given it an honourable burial in the kindly bosom of Mother Earth for the sake of its strange owner who must have found *his* grave in the belly of a lion or perhaps in those of two or more.

I never think of that tramp down to Beira without calling up the picture of an elderly, ragged, red-haired, stocky figure with a wooden leg, stumping manfully into the dark shadows of the primeval woods, snapping his fingers at famine and fever, and swearing at lions in Dutch. All wasted courage—to end in two burnt-out fires and a wooden leg lying by the wayside.

Having given so many days as we could spare to head-hunting, we went on our way to a mean place of tin shanties on the Pungwe River, about seventy miles from Beira. Here we took a large canoe, dug out of one tree and manned by four natives to paddle it, and finished our journey in this. The journey by water was amusing after our long tramp. There were many crocodiles along the banks and hippos in the water. We occasionally had a shot at these, particularly the crocodiles, for which I felt no tenderness. I don’t think we did much harm to either, but it was amusing to see an old crocodile slumbering on the muddy bank, suddenly lift up his tail like a lizard and prance into the water when a bullet tickled his armour. At night we slept at the bottom of our canoe and travelled by day downstream—a plan of campaign that suited our native crew perfectly. They sang most of the day and chattered most of the night. We were now in the full blaze of the tropics and almost on sea-level, so that the heat became too great to be pleasant and the mosquitoes intolerable. We were glad when we reached Beira and, whatever the discomforts of that then

deadly place, could at least enjoy occasional sea breezes and sea-bathing.

The latter was not, however, without some excitement because, whenever the water was more than about five or six feet deep, we could see above the water the sharp dorsal fins of sharks moving slowly back and forth, waiting for any fool that would venture out too far.

Beira was packed with men who had left Mashonaland and were waiting for a steamer to take them down to Durban. Most of them were suffering from malaria, and no day passed without one or two funerals of these unfortunate pioneers. It was a city of one street of tin shanties and tents pitched on sand, on which the sun beat mercilessly till it became much too hot to walk on barefooted with comfort. Turner, Poulin and I found a lodging on the bare boarded floor of a tin general store, with a perfect bouquet of odours of every kind. We paid through the nose for this, but were glad to get shelter of any kind, for spring showers had already begun. We were kept three weeks in this earthly Paradise, and I never remember three more dreary weeks, though they were much lightened by the companionship of Bob Williams, Turner and Poulin.

At last the long expected steamer arrived. But it was full to the brim. Turner, however, being a Captain in the Chartered Company's Police, and having a military way with him, managed to secure berths for all of us. He slept in the captain's cabin, while we were given lying room on the sofas round the dining saloon. The ship had a heavy list and carried, as far as I remember, about five hundred passengers, being at least three hundred and fifty above the proper number. But we were all so delighted to get out of Beira that we thought nothing of that. It was sad, however, to see the hundreds who had to be left behind.

The first "civilised" place we struck was Lourenço Marques, where civilisation consisted of a few paved streets, innumerable liquor shops, a theatre or two, a horse-tram and the other evidences of *kultur* generally

to be found in such places. The heat and dirt were insufferable, and though we stayed here a couple of days, most of us, after a day ashore, preferred to spend the next on board our overcrowded ship.

Soon after leaving Beira, Turner, who inhabited the captain's cabin, told me that he had noticed that the latter frequently got up during the night, and from the smell in the cabin he (Turner) believed that he was always nipping whisky and was on the verge of D.T. One morning he came to me and said he had discovered the captain's private *cache* of whisky and had thrown it all overboard during the night. This was no doubt lucky for the captain and for the passengers. One saying of the captain's entertained me. We were all at breakfast as we steamed out of Delagoa Bay when suddenly we felt two or three violent bumps, crockery rattled and dishes fell over. It was clear that we had touched bottom. The captain got up slowly, looked out of the port-hole, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and then said :

"It's all right. It's only the first mate taking soundings."

It *was* all right ; we scraped along slowly and got off without damage.

From Lourenço Marques we went to Durban, where I was thankful to leave the crowded steamer, with her heavy list and more or less drunken captain, and to enjoy most of the comforts of English civilisation once more. A good clean hotel, well-cooked food, comfortable beds with mosquito curtains and a truly delightful, well-laid-out little town. Turner and I (Poulin had left us at Lourenço Marques) spent some days here waiting for a larger boat to take us round the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Town. I thoroughly enjoyed these few days at Durban, though I was now anxious to get back to my mother, from whom I found letters saying that she was impatiently waiting my arrival.

The journey round the Cape was, as always, very rough, but I was quite hardened to anything by this time.

We touched at Port Elizabeth, where we had to be lowered in a crate on to the deck of a little tender that was bounding about on the enormous rollers like a pea on a drum ; at East London, where only passengers for that town were allowed to land, and so on to Cape Town, where we arrived one fine spring morning. Quickly landing, I drove at once to the old boarding-house at Wynburg where, to my delight, I found my dear mother in very good health and spirits.

She had, on the whole, enjoyed her seven and a half months in South Africa very greatly. I didn't really worry much about her while I was away, for she had a most faithful old Italian courier and a pretty Swiss maid, whom South Africa linked together in holy matrimony. She had made innumerable friends, as she always did. She had spent two or three months at the end of winter and beginning of spring up on the high veld, and made numberless sketches and collected specimens of the wild flowers which enchanted her. We spent a very happy fortnight at the Cape, being entertained by her friends and mine, and saying good-bye to the Lochs at Government House, and Seymour Fort, Graham Bower, the Colonial Secretary and his wife, the Rudds, the Merri-mans, to both of whom we were sincerely attached, old Mrs. Koopmans, who was called the Queen of Cape Dutch society, and many others ; last and greatest, of course, Rhodes, with whom I again dined and lunched, returning ever more and more impressed by his theories of the future of the Empire.

I bade a cheerful good-bye to Chanley Turner, hoping soon to see him again in our own North Country next time he got a long leave and could visit England. I had grown to be very fond of him and to appreciate his sterling qualities, though he was hardly my sort nor I his. He was a splendid companion for the sort of journey we made together. I was however not to see him again, for I was not in England when he came on leave, and a year or two later, to my sorrow, I heard that he had died of fever.

The journey home was quite uneventful. Filled with

Rhodes's ideas on the political and economic development of the Empire, I went home in the confident belief that I should be able to inspire others with the same enthusiasm, and enter Parliament as a Home Rule Imperial Preference man.

I was quickly undeceived.

CHAPTER V

CANDIDATURE FOR PARLIAMENT : WORCESTER

(1892)

ON returning to England from South Africa in the autumn of 1891, I consulted my brother Stafford, who was a strong Liberal and a Home Ruler, about taking steps to find a parliamentary constituency for me for the next Election. I myself had set my heart on contesting Whitehaven, in West Cumberland. It was in my own county, and I could have worked it easily from Ravenstone, the house my mother had built for herself on Bassenthwaite Lake. Besides this, it was a great Tory stronghold of the Lowther family, who for over a century had been the political opponents of my people in East Cumberland, and it appealed to my youthful imagination to attack them in their own particular stronghold, which was then looked upon as impregnable.

Stafford, however, thought it quite useless for me to waste time over so hopeless a proposition as Whitehaven, and suggested my going down to Gloucestershire to the Dursley constituency, which was next door to the Thornbury district, for which he was then standing as Liberal candidate. He had given up the Penrith district in East Cumberland, which he had represented during several Parliaments, because my elder brother Henry was a Unionist and he did not want to oppose his politics in his home district. This act of magnanimity was politically fatal to both, as neither of them were again returned to Parliament.

Therefore, recommended by Stafford, who, however, shook his head over my Imperial Tariff Preference views,

I was invited in the early part of 1892 to Dursley to be looked over and heard by the Liberal Committee. I was cordially received and asked to state my views. My views on Home Rule were considered to be sound ; when I went on to explain my views on social reform, which to-day would be considered almost conventionally Conservative, my principal plank being non-contributory old-age pensions, borrowed from the writings of Charles Booth, who was then just beginning to become known, I could see that I was considered much too advanced a Radical, and when finally I let myself go on Tariff Reform, I felt that the tea froze. There was nothing to be done with these old gentlemen, to whom the law of supply and demand and the " higgling of the market " were as much a part of the Divine Will as the Ten Commandments.

At last the chairman, an elderly person with white mutton-chop whiskers and comfortable rotund contours, thanked me politely for having come, and then added :

" I fear, my dear young man, that with your views there is no committee in the country, Liberal or Conservative, that would adopt you as candidate for the constituency."

I felt he was probably right, and that if I wanted to stand at the next Election, which I did, I must keep my ideas about Free Trade and Tariff Reform in abeyance until circumstances became more favourable.

When I told Stafford the result of my interview—the humour of which I quite relished—he agreed heartily, and then said we must consult Arnold Morley, the Chief Whip, who would no doubt be able to supply me with a constituency where I could get a fair run for my money.

In due course we saw Arnold Morley, whom I already knew, and he promised to do what he could.

Meanwhile it was clear that a new Election must take place in a few months, the two great protagonists being Gladstone and Salisbury.

I went up to Ravenstone to wait till called for. The call only came about four weeks before the General Election of August, 1892, and then I was told I had been allocated to Worcester which, known traditionally as the

Faithful City since the time of Charles II, was in Liberal circles regarded as faithful mainly to Beer and Bishops. Morley assured me that there was a good sporting chance there. So to Worcester I went, and having refrained from alluding to Tariff Reform, was unanimously adopted as Liberal candidate. My opponent was George Allsopp, the son of Lord Hindlip, the great brewer. His principal strength lay in the fact that he was, if possible, an even worse speaker than I, knew it, and wisely refrained from taking any part in the Election till quite late in the day. This gave him what seemed to me a very unfair advantage, and at last I gave vent to my feelings by beginning one of my discourses with a *cri de cœur*: "Would that mine enemy would make a speech."

Besides Home Rule I accepted the whole Liberal programme of that date, lock, stock and barrel, and only attempted one serious addition on my own initiative, which was the Charles Booth proposal for non-contributory old-age pensions, besides a general pensions system for workmen incapacitated by accidents or sickness.

The Tory papers, who had never heard of Charles Booth (they were rather behind the times in Worcester), nicknamed me the Socialist-Salvationist, and I was considered a danger to Church and State.

I look back, however, to the four or five weeks I spent in Worcester, or rather at Malvern, where I lived while conducting the campaign, with lively pleasure. The country was lovely at that time of year, and I met many pleasant people, especially dear old Canon Melvill, of the Cathedral who, in order to show the citizens of the Faithful City that I was neither a Jesuit in disguise nor a militant Atheist, both of which rumour accused me of being, used to walk up and down the High Street leaning on my arm. His daughter, Mrs. Henry Gaskell, became a lifelong friend, and to her I owe the great joy of acquaintance and many meetings with Sir Edward Burne-Jones, or B. J., as we always called him.

I discovered before long that Worcester, besides being an enchanting old place, had the reputation of being one

of the most corrupt constituencies in the Kingdom, with the help, I like to think, rather of Beer than of Bishops, and my supporters at any rate had the satisfaction of being able to attribute my defeat to this cause. I however, had no such illusions and early realised that my failure would be due to the shortcomings of their candidate.

I was amused when, shortly before the polls closed, a stalwart Liberal rushed up to me and said :

"There are twenty-five fellows waiting in the pub round the corner, and they only want half a crown apiece."

I said I thought that it would be wiser to let the Tories get them. I was told afterwards that it would have been easy to unseat the "Honourable George," as he was called, on a charge of corruption, but I had no wish to take action. I confess, however, that I read with some little *schadenfreude* (malignant satisfaction) one or two Elections later, that the Tory Member had been unseated, and the poor Faithful City disfranchised for a sufficiently long period.

Yet I had no quarrel with Worcester, which is indeed a most charming spot, except as regards its politics. Rather am I grateful to it for having rejected my addresses as unpromisingly as it did, because it proved to me that I had no gift for public speaking, and should never be able to do anything in Parliament. Moreover, I came out of that Election quite convinced I could never be a Party politician. To attach myself to any Party would, I felt, always necessitate parting with some of my most cherished convictions. I loved no party sufficiently to be prepared to do this—in fact I was already beginning to feel a proper contempt for myself for having suppressed my views as regards what was later called "Tariff Reform." Party politics, and with them the House of Commons, had no further charms for me. I gave up, therefore, from that time any idea of being a candidate again.

Both my brothers were defeated in the same Election—Henry, the Liberal Unionist, in East Cumberland, by exactly the same number of votes as I, and Stafford, the

Liberal, in the Thornbury division of Gloucestershire. Neither of them ever recovered their seats in the House.

I retired to Ravenstone to consider what I had best do next. My mother received me with rather mixed feelings. Although, with her usual angelic goodness, she paid my election expenses, she did not at all approve of my political views, which she considered very extreme. When, therefore, I announced that I would not stand again, I had not to encounter any opposition on her part. Only rarely she expressed a regret that I had left the Diplomatic Service—a regret that I could not share.

CHAPTER VI

FIRST AND SECOND JOURNEYS TO MOROCCO

(1893)

AFTER the Worcester Election of 1892 I was naturally at a loose end. I had retired from the Diplomatic Service in order to stand for Parliament, and I had now turned my back on all thought of Parliament. The only thing to do was to wait and see. The rest of the summer and autumn passed pleasantly enough in Cumberland and Scotland, and in the winter I went to Rome with my mother, as she needed a warm climate for her health. Here I was, as always, quite happy, walking and riding over the Campagna, taking drawing lessons with my sister Elsie from our old friend and master, Onorato Carlandi, who knew the Roman Campagna like his own studio, and loved it with the passion of a Romeo for his Juliet. He also had his great adventure there, having fought as a sixteen-year-old volunteer under Garibaldi at Mentana. In 1934 he was still painting as actively as ever and, always fond of a jest, gave me his new visiting card—

“ *Onorato Somaro Laziale
dinamico* ”

(“ Onorato—Latian Ass The Dynamic ”)

Before joining the Foreign Office a second time under Lord Kimberley I made, in February and March, 1893, what was perhaps the most enchanting and entertaining journey of my life. My brother Harry, who had been wanting to visit Morocco for a long time, suggested to me to meet him at Tangier in March, and we would then together go camping in the interior.

I was in Italy and arrived at Tangier before him, only to find that he was delayed but would take the next boat a week later. I enjoyed the novelty of my semi-Moorish surroundings at Tangier, rode over to Tetuan and spent the day there, accompanied by a Moorish servant, Mustapha, who spoke some English and looked after my horse and his own mule. I made acquaintance with our Consul, Herbert White, and his family ; with Sir Ernest Satow, our Minister ; and Arthur Herbert, a British diplomat,¹ and his wife, both of whom became and remained great friends ; with the English Dowager Shereefa of Wazan, with a rich Anglo-Greek, Mr. Perdicaris, who had a beautiful garden, and last, but not least, with Walter Harris, the *Times* correspondent, who proved one of the most perfect travelling companions in the world.

After spending some time waiting for my brother, who at last telegraphed he could not get away, I was delighted when the Arthur Herberts, who were going camping with Walter Harris, suggested that I should join them. I naturally jumped at the offer. It was possible in those days to hire in Tangier everything required for camping : tents, bedding, camp furniture, horses, mules, servants, etc., and in a very short time, with the help of the indefatigable Walter Harris, we were all equipped. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert had one large tent, and a small one for him to dress in ; Walter and I shared another, and we had a large, common dining- and sitting-room tent. Our servants who were not a few had their own tents and there was a cooking-tent besides. All this, together with our personal clothes and other paraphernalia necessitated quite a caravan of mules and horses. The weather was perfect as we left Tangier for Wazan, which was our first objective, and it continued so for nearly all our journey. The country, which was almost treeless but undulating, was cultivated in patches and olive groves occurred near villages and towns. Spring was in full swing and there were masses of wild flowers of all kinds. I remember

¹ Afterwards Sir Arthur Herbert, British Minister at Oslo.

particularly whole hill-sides gilded with the pale yellow of wild mustard flowers and the deep orange of the marigold varied with acres of blue irises. In more dry and stony country there were masses of wild lavender, rosemary and cistus and other sweet-scented plants. We travelled slowly and enjoyed it all the more on that account, always reaching our day's objective for the night in very good time to let the servants prepare the camp and cook the dinner. It was the fasting month of Ramadan so that the latter ate nothing during the day, but despite this they were, on the whole, a very happy and peaceable lot. Mustapha was a continual joy to me whether he was in a good temper or not, for his English was in both cases of the most lively and unexpected kind. We took, I think, the inside of a week to get to Wazan, and it seemed to me that a more completely enjoyable life it would be impossible to imagine. To the delight of riding and camping in such attractive country, as yet unspoiled by civilisation, for there were not even any roads but only great, broad caravan tracks, we had the company of Walter Harris, who was the greatest entertainer as a conversationalist in such surroundings that can be imagined. He knew his Morocco of that time as probably no other European. The old Shereef of Wazan had asked him to stay there some years before and had found him so excellent a court jester that he had refused to let him go and kept him there for nearly a year. As a result of living so long in intimate contact with high-class Moors he had acquired both a complete mastery over Moorish Arabic and a wonderful understanding of the ways of thought and tricks of speech. Without understanding a word I had plenty of opportunities of realising this.

Unlike other travellers, his travellers' tales were endless sources of interest and fun, told with his sparkling sense of humour, and they gave us a picture of the country and the people such as all the most dryasdust geographical lectures could never have produced. He was a mine of amusing stories, some of which afterwards—a

good deal embellished—found their way into *Blackwoods* or the graver columns of *The Times*.

One particularly delightful story of this kind I remember. A poor Moorish beggar, who was so poor that even his slippers were falling to bits, went to the mosque for his morning prayers and begged Allah to have mercy on his sad condition and particularly on the state of his slippers. While he with many others was worshipping there came a violent earthquake which caused many victims among the worshippers who had all, as the Eastern custom is, left their slippers in the entrance of the mosque. Our poor beggar passing out untouched saw scores of unclaimed slippers and, picking a dozen or so of the best which he put into his wallet, he thanked Allah for having so mercifully heard his prayer.

This was naturally not told crudely as above but with a wealth of Moorish, so to speak, rococo decoration and gentle satire which made it worthy of a chapter of Anatole France.

As we neared Wazan on a beautiful, clear and sunny day of April, we rode through fine olive groves with plenty of running water and cultivated gardens ; a truly delightful bit of country. Walter had notified the Shereef of our arrival and His Highness had invited us to lodge in a house of his with a large garden in the outskirts of the little town.

We arrived fairly early in the afternoon and Walter sent our servants and caravan to unpack and settle down in the quarters allotted to us, while we ourselves, according to etiquette, were to go and call at once on the Shereef. Having been apprised of our arrival beforehand he received us on the portico of his house, where he also received us every day while we were there. He was a youngish, rather handsome man of about thirty-five, inclining to *embonpoint*, with a black beard and a pleasant smile. Dressed in green cloth with a green turban, and sitting on a green cushion as befitted a lineal descendant of the Prophet, surrounded by male members of the Shereefian family whose greenness was slightly less

pronounced than his, and by members of the court and government dressed in dark blue and chocolate-coloured cloaks over their white dress, and seated on different coloured cushions, they made a picture, grouped in the shade of the white portico, with its white columns, which seemed to have come directly out of the Arabian Nights Tales. I realised at once to my great delight that though in latitude we were far to the West, we were here as truly in the heart of the East as if we were actually in Mecca. We were asked to sit down on cushions opposite the Shereef and through the columns on my left I could see against the bright blue of the sky the white minaret of a little white mosque whose roof was of bright green tiles. On these green tiles again were many white pigeons cooing and courting and flitting about. The combination of the white mosque and minaret with the green tile roof and its white pigeons against a turquoise sky made a picture I have never forgotten.

The Shereef carried on an animated conversation with Walter Harris and asked us questions about ourselves and our journey through Walter Harris as interpreter. After what seemed hours to me, sitting cross-legged on my cushion, the Shereef rose and dismissed us and we were shown to our quarters, a charming little one-storied house with a veranda leading to a rather unkempt-looking garden, with running water beside the paths and one or two pools and many orange and fruit trees. Our goods and chattels had been already unpacked and our beds and camp furniture set out, making the house quite home-like. Here we were to stay for five or six days as the Shereef would not let Walter go sooner.

Every morning we went and sat on the portico by the white mosque with the green tiles, and there came petitioners to interview the Shereef and ask for justice in some case they had brought before the courts. They always brought presents, poor lambs or kids with their legs tied together or chickens or pigeons or baskets of barley and other edibles which were at once whisked away to the kitchen.

There they squatted on their haunches before the Shereef and began interminable harangues with much gesticulating to which he listened, it must be admitted, most patiently. But then he had taken his toll. When they were exhausted he would stroke his beard, assume an air of judicial wisdom, and say the case should receive consideration, which is much what a Cabinet Minister in England would do. After he had had enough of these cases, which lasted two to three hours, he would have a conversation with Walter which seemed to be carried on in a spirit of the friendliest chaff, the courtiers chiming in, when they thought the Shereef had made a hit, with a series of strange sounds signifying their approval, as I believe in India a hanger-on called a *shabash wallah* always applauds a public story-teller or as the *claque* in a French theatre starts to clap an actor at the proper moment.

Once, however, the Shereef scored so heavily, making his court fairly rock with laughter, that I asked Walter what was passing. The Shereef, he said, had asked him for an account of his recent journey to the holy oasis of Taflet in Southern Morocco which no European had yet visited. Walter told him that he had travelled as a Moorish pilgrim, passing unharmed through the various wild tribes of the south of Morocco.

"I even," he said, "often slept in mosques in spite of the saying you have that the roof of a mosque will fall in on a Christian if he sleeps in its precincts."

The Shereef's eye twinkled, and he said, dryly: "That only proves that you are not a Christian."

This naturally brought the house down, and even the Herberts and I were compelled to join in the laughter without understanding the joke at the moment, for surely one of the greatest qualifications for court life in any country is appreciation of a royal jest whether one understands it or not.

One day the Shereef came to pay us a return visit at our house. He inquired most minutely into our arrangements and asked if all had been done for our comfort.

Then he went for a walk in the garden. It was full of violets and periwinkles and seemed to us a pleasant place, but on a sudden his face clouded and he asked a question sharply of his principal attendant.

"Why," he said, "are there so many weeds in the flower-beds and so many leaves on the paths?"

The attendant, bowing, answered:

"Your Highness forgets that three weeks ago you sent all the gardeners to prison."

"Did I?" said the Shereef. "Well, well—perhaps I did. Send for them all at once and tell them that if they clear up the garden well they shall be forgiven their faults."

Walter told me that on a previous occasion His Highness, having a mind to go out coursing, sent for his huntsmen, his hounds, and his horses. They arrived rather late owing to the unexpected summons and were all, men, horses and hounds, ordered to prison where they remained until the Shereef again had a mind to go coursing hares. Fortunately a Moorish prison was not so bad for those who had friends or relations to bring them food and drink. If one was friendless it meant starvation.

In the afternoon we were free to go out riding about in the country, and in the evening we were allowed to amuse ourselves in our house; the mornings only had to be devoted to the Shereef's court.

We were not sorry after four or five days of this life to move on, but it was very interesting and gave us an insight into Eastern ways that has made books on the East living pictures for me instead of being merely fairy stories.

From Wazan we went up into a hilly country to the south-east where Walter wanted to meet some hillsmen with whom he had cattle dealings. We visited one or two very remote villages whose inhabitants, or at least the womenfolk, had never seen white people before and we naturally aroused great curiosity. Our camp furniture and our peculiar habits so excited the women that Walter had to explain to them that we wished to be private

while we were dressing, shaving and having our baths. They were always perfectly courteous and never attempted to enter our tents if asked not to do so.

As we had an old Moorish soldier with us, a most decrepit old fellow in very ragged outfit, with a long gun and a half-starved horse, we were supposed to be under the protection of the Sultan, and we were always careful to camp at night close to a village which then, according to the laws of the land, because of the presence of our old soldier, became responsible for our safety and had to set guards round our tents at night. These guards, of course, required a fairly liberal reward the next day.

One night, the guards outside the tent that I shared with Walter, kept up an incessant chatter which prevented me from sleeping. I asked Walter to tell them to stop. He said he wanted to listen for a bit longer to what they were saying and would tell me all about it later. After a while they stopped, and next morning at breakfast Walter told us that they had been discussing the relative advantages of guarding till the morning and getting a moderate reward or kidnapping us and holding us for a large ransom. Two or three of the guards seemed inclined to the latter course, but old Nestor finally won the day for honesty by telling them that all that would happen if they carried us off would be that the Government of the Unbelievers would probably get together a large sum of money and pay the ransom. But what would happen next? The Unbelievers would demand this back from the Sultan at the cannon's mouth, saying that the strangers were under his protection. He would then demand the ransom money back from the village by force of arms, and not only the money which they had so righteously gained by kidnapping us Unbelievers, but also twice or three times as much so that he might keep what was over for himself. The speaker pointed out with unanswerable force that all this would make them very unpopular in their village. So they desisted and went to sleep as good guards should, leaving their charges to do likewise.

From these hill villages we went to Fez. This was at that time a city of some 125,000 inhabitants according to the best data available. There were living in it not a dozen Europeans, hardly, I believe, more than half a dozen. Of these we saw most frequently our unpaid Vice-Consul, Mr., now Sir James Macleod, and an Italian, Colonel Ferrero, who was, I believe, instructor of the Shereefian Gendarmerie. Kaid McLean, the well-known Scottish Commander of the Shereefian armies, was not in Fez at the time, being at Marrakesh with the Sultan.

We rode one beautiful spring morning into the walled city in which we were to find the true living picture of the Arabian Nights. The narrow streets with high houses like forts, having no aperture in the walls, but one great gateway kept by huge nail-studded doors through which, if opened by chance to let out an inmate, the passer-by would see fantastic courtyards with coloured tiles and fountains and carved verandas coloured in red and blue and green. Beyond these were often gardens with fruit trees, olives, oleanders and cypresses, running water, and white-draped figures of men moving to and fro, or black-draped figures of women. All women wore black cloaks and were, of course, veiled up to the eyes when they left their own quarters.

The narrow streets, which were certainly gloomy, were just wide enough to allow two loaded camels to pass. The city was singularly silent. Except for the cries of mule and camel drivers, hardly a sound was audible except, perhaps, the street cries of water-carriers with great bronze water-pots slung over their shoulders.

Into the mosques, which we only dared glance at as we passed by them, we were not allowed to enter, but judging by these furtive glances their courts were a riot of coloured tiles, beautiful fountains, and coloured and carved cedar wood. There were lovely fountains of coloured tiles every now and again in the streets where the water-carriers came to get water. The bazaars were full of small shops before which solemn Moors sat smoking

or drinking their favourite green tea so sugared that it was like syrup, and in these shops piled away in the dark might be beautiful Moorish embroideries or the latest Manchester cotton goods; fine morocco leather work or some cheap imitation from Germany. Nothing seemed ever to arouse these dignified salesmen into the slightest semblance of what in America is called super-salesmanship. If the passer-by wanted very badly to buy something from him, they might, if so inclined, move to get it for them, but as to drawing the attention of the passer-by to their wares they would no more have dreamt of doing this than a duke who wished to sell an ancestral portrait by Van Dyck or Holbein. The cafés also were a delight, with their groups of grave and reverend seniors with coloured jellabs and red fezzes bound round with clean white cotton bands, smoking cigarettes and sipping their sickly sweet, green tea. They were a continual enigma to me, and I would have given much to look into their hearts and minds. No one seemed ever to read a book or to want to read at all, and there were few, if any, games to pass the time. Their marriages were settled for them in early life and they could not indulge in any amorous intrigues except at such risk as made the game not worth the candle. A more completely passive existence it would be difficult to imagine, yet, I suppose, they had sometimes an object they thought worth striving for. In any case, for the stranger and the traveller who was looking for new sensations and effects, they were completely satisfying.

One thing I learnt from talking to Walter Harris, to Macleod, to the Italian, Colonel Ferrero, was that all this rather beautiful, quiet, peaceful, dignified life was nearing its end. The Shereefian Empire lived rottenly from hand to mouth on squeeze and graft. The Sultan squeezed the Treasury, the Treasurer the tax-gatherers, and the tax-gatherers the people, and the usurers squeezed them all. While the small shopkeepers and craftsmen in the cities led a reasonably secure and pleasant life, the wretched peasants, who really produced the needs of the

country, were ground down between tax-collectors and usurers, the upper and the nether millstones of Moorish life. A few grafters and usurers made large fortunes, but the rest of the population in the cities just managed to exist with some little comfort, while the rural population was always on the verge of starvation. It was no wonder the country was honeycombed with brigandage and even open insurrection, for there were many villages in the mountains into which no officer of the Government dared go.

One thing was clear—that so rotten a State could not last much longer; already the eagles were gathering about it. Who would get the prize? Walter Harris at that time was all for the British Protectorate, as were many business men who had interests there—Macleod, who then represented a Glasgow firm, would have welcomed this. The Germans were just beginning to sell many cheap goods there, and, besides, would have been glad to acquire so promising a Colony. Italy was far from indifferent to the fate of Morocco. Spain had old claims to sections of Moorish territory. The scramble for Morocco was as unavoidable as day or night. How would it end?

I had acquired the habit of writing letters about countries I travelled in either to Sir Percy Anderson, of the African Department of the Foreign Office, or Sir Thomas Sanderson, the then Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office. While in Morocco I wrote to the latter two or three letters describing the state of the country and its probable early collapse, saying that it was clear that some civilised country would have to take it in hand. I altogether deprecated the idea of a British Protectorate in Morocco, saying that we had as much in South and Equatorial Africa as we could manage, and that our only real interest lay in keeping open the Straits of Gibraltar. I foresaw a long and bitter struggle with France if we attempted anything of the kind, and then suggested that we should tell France that we would give her a free hand in Morocco if she would recognise our

preponderating position in Egypt, provided always Tangier and the territory about it could be neutralised. This condition was elementary, since only so could not only our Mediterranean interests, but those of Spain and Italy and even of the rest of the world, be safeguarded in time of war, and their adherence to the plan secured.

It seemed to me that we were running the risk of numbering among our possible antagonists in Europe, of whom Russia was so to speak the hereditary one, not only Germany on account of her new naval and colonial policy, but also quite unnecessarily France, whom we had beaten in the first round over Egypt, and should now therefore hasten to assuage by withdrawing from any claims to Morocco, otherwise we were likely to have a European coalition formed against us. This is what happened later to Germany owing entirely to her own blindness, though she cried aloud that she was the victim of an infernal "*Einkreisungspolitik*" policy of encirclement set on foot by Edward VII.

I got a nice letter from Sir Thomas Sanderson with thanks and the conventional assurance that my letters had been read with interest, but heard nothing more. Morocco, as all will remember, as nearly as possible led us into a European war from which we were only saved by the Conference of Algeciras—where we supported the claims of France to Morocco plus the neutrality of Tangier and district.

Many years later, when the *entente cordiale* had become an accomplished fact and I was back in the Diplomatic Service, Sir Thomas, in a moment of expansion, told Isa¹ that he had always considered me as one of the founders of the *entente cordiale* on account of those letters from Morocco! I have lost all trace of them, but I doubt if anything would be found in them to support this idea beyond the fact that I saw in the spring of 1893, what must have been clear to any unprejudiced eye, that Morocco must shortly become a bone of contention in Europe; that it would be folly for us to estrange France

¹ Lady Isabella Howard, afterwards Lady Howard of Penrith

still further by striving with her for mastery in that part of Africa, when what all believed much more essential for us was the security of the Suez Canal, and that therefore a deal over Egypt and Morocco was obviously the sanest and most satisfactory solution for us.

It took many of our people years to see this, but I suppose there is no one with any political sense now who would not admit it.

The Arthur Herberts, Walter Harris and I spent a delightful week or so in Fez. We had a very pleasant empty Moorish house of the usual type—courtyard and small garden with fountain of running water, servants' quarters on the ground floor, rooms enough for the four of us on the first floor, and a flat roof on which we men were warned not to show ourselves if we valued our skins, for these roofs were the only private places where Moorish women could walk and take the air unveiled. For a man to go there was a breach of the strictest rules of etiquette. One afternoon, however, we were invited to tea by a Moor who had been in England and considered himself emancipated. He invited Arthur, Walter and me to go up on to his roof, provided we kept well behind the parapet, and to peep over the edge. It was near the sunset hour when the female rank and fashion of Fez was disporting itself on the roofs of all the neighbouring houses. We ought, I suppose, strictly speaking, not to have accepted an invitation which might have brought our host into serious trouble, but curiosity overcame our scruples. We crawled to the parapet and peeped over, and a really extraordinary sight met our eyes. On every housetop for many streets all round were gaily dressed women vying with each other in bright coloured silks, satins and brocades, proving a favourite theory of mine that women do not dress up for men but to outdo each other. They were of all ages, carried on animated conversations from one roof to another and, with their rather harsh voices and bright clothes, they were more like a parrot-house than anything I ever saw. After a very few minutes our host, who was beginning to get

nervous, warned us to come down again, and we had to leave a scene that we would gladly have watched until sunset.

One evening we were invited to dine with the Amin or Treasurer of the Sultan. He was of course the arch-Grafter and Squeezer, and therefore naturally had the largest and finest house in Fez. It was indeed most beautiful, with its carved red and blue and gilded cedar-wood balconies round the court, its splashing fountains and beautifully coloured tiles. I should have liked to examine it more carefully, but we were at once ushered into a little cloakroom, where we were supposed either to take off our shoes altogether and enter the dining-room in our socks, or else to put on clean shoes or Moorish slippers. The Herberts and I put on evening pumps over our silk socks ; Walter preferred to follow the Moorish custom and went in in his socks.

Our host saluted us gravely as we entered and examined our feet. Then he turned to Walter, and said he felt somewhat embarrassed because he had intended to follow either the Moorish custom of no footgear, or the European custom of some kind of shoe. As, however, some of us had come with shoes on and Walter had come without, in order to be polite and make none of us feel uncomfortable, he would take off one slipper and keep the other on. He suited the action to the word, and I felt that politeness could really go no further. Our dinner was thoroughly Moorish : gobbets of a large white fish fried in oil ; *kus-kus* (a pile of rice with scraps of meat and raisins), and a large dish of chicken, cut up anyhow and piled one piece on another, out of which the Amin most kindly would pick some titbit in his fingers and put on to the plates of the Herberts, who were his neighbours at the banquet ; for he, like most Moors, and like Henry VIII (if films are to be believed), scorned the use of knives, forks and spoons. This was followed by a huge sweet cake and fruits. Each dish was separated from the next by, if I remember rightly, three small cups of syrupy green tea which it was *de rigueur* to consume.

Walter Harris did his best to make this meal a success but, like most banquets given by the very rich, it somehow flagged. What I remember most about it was the Arabian Nights beauty of the house, though it was of modern construction, and the incident of the Amin's slippers.

We spent our time visiting the bazaars, which were most interesting, and making purchases, riding round the old walls of the city made of sun-dried bricks, which with their towered gates reminded me much of those of Rome, and entertaining and being entertained by Colonel Ferrero, who had an excellent Italian cook, and by James Macleod, who became a great friend. I was able later to be of use to him in helping to get him appointed to the regular Consular Service. He did yeoman service in Fez, and went through revolutions and sieges and what-not, rising in the service till he got one of the most coveted posts in any Eastern country—the Consulate-General in Tunis. He had a very sound view of the state of the country, and was able to supplement Walter's intimate and romantic acquaintance with its people and customs by his Scottish love for facts and even figures.

One feature of Fez filled me with joy. Here was a capital city of 125,000 inhabitants, the central market of a great district and having citizens of considerable wealth, with an ancient civilisation. Yet never throughout the entire city, during all the time that I was there, did I see a single poster or advertisement. The worthy citizens clearly went on the principle that good wine needs no bush. It is difficult to exaggerate the relief caused by this great negative quality. Public buildings were not disfigured by political addresses; huge coloured pictures of doctors pointing a finger at one and saying "——'s Stout would be good for *you*" (when I knew it would not) did not attack me at every turn of the road; bald statements that somebody's tooth powder is the best (which was probably far from true) did not irritate with their self-sufficiency. In this, I felt, Fez, whatever its shortcomings in other ways, set us an example that we, the super-civilised, might well follow to our advantage.

This is but a question of education. Perhaps we may rise to the standard of Fez of the 1890's in another hundred years.

After Fez we visited Mekinez, a former capital and a somewhat ruined city, where we were entertained at dinner by a Jewish family, and we also went out of our way to see Volubilis, where there rose out of a deserted plain some ruins of an ancient Roman city. From there we made our way north and our luck in weather left us, for it began to rain horribly. The road, whenever it did not pass over dry, rocky hills, became a sea of mud, and our clothes were all soaked. My sorrow's crown of sorrow arrived when the mule that carried my bedding fell into a hole while fording a small river in flood, so that I had nothing dry to sleep in. The largest river on our road back, the Sîbou, was unfordable, and we had to be ferried across in a large, flat-bottomed boat in which we, our servants and our goods and chattels, were piled, while our beasts were made to swim behind. This naturally necessitated several journeys and took a long time.

In spite, however, of this rather uncomfortable close to our six weeks or so of travel in Northern Morocco, the Herberts and I agreed that we had never had a better or more interesting journey, thanks largely to the leadership and knowledge of the country of Walter Harris, and his unflagging gifts as a prince of entertainers. Rain or no rain, we were sorry it was over, and were in after years always delighted when we met again to talk Morocco.

So enthusiastic indeed was I that I persuaded my sister, Elsie Carnarvon, to join me next year for a shorter camping journey with Walter Harris. She brought her two boys, Aubrey and Mervyn Herbert, who were then at Eton. I am not sure if this did not lay the foundation of Aubrey's love for Eastern travel which never left him. His was a most adventurous spirit and as a boy, when he couldn't actually see wild beasts or brigands in the path, he always rejoiced in the belief that they were there and that some terrific adventure would shortly—to his own infinite content—burst upon him and his less eager

companions. He was a wholly delightful modern Don Quixote, a great knight but never of a melancholy countenance. Some impression may be got of what he was from his own book, *Ben-Kendim*.

Nothing particularly worth recording occurred during the second trip in Northern Morocco, and I remember it mainly on account of the intense joy and amusement the two boys, Aubrey and Mervyn, got out of every sight and sound. I have never been back to Morocco and I doubt if I should care to do so. The country has become civilised, with hotels, roads, motor-cars, radios, telephones, and all the unpleasant adjuncts of civilisation, including, probably, advertisements. My sister and her two sons, Arthur Herbert and Walter Harris, are all dead, and there would be nothing but ghosts of a happy past to greet me now on the shore of Tangier.

It was at the end of our journey through Northern Morocco, on my return to Tangier at the close of March, 1894, that I found awaiting me a letter from Armine Wodehouse, asking me to act as his father's Assistant Private Secretary at the Foreign Office. I telegraphed my acceptance and left at once for London to take up my new duties in my old haunts.

CHAPTER VII

SECOND PERIOD AT FOREIGN OFFICE

(1894)

THE Liberals had returned to power in 1892 with a small majority, including the Irish, pledged to bring in a Home Rule Bill; Gladstone was Prime Minister; Rosebery, Foreign Secretary; and Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Between the two last there was no love lost. Rosebery was, in Harcourt's eyes, exuding at every pore the venom of Imperialism, while Harcourt, in Rosebery's opinion, was the Champion Little Englander. Neither took any trouble to hide his views from his colleagues or from the public, and this did not make for harmony in poor Mr. Gladstone's last Cabinet. He, in fact, old and worn with the strife of contending factions, resigned in March, 1893, when the Queen, to the undying vexation of Harcourt and the more Radical faction, sent for Rosebery to form the new Cabinet and continue Gladstone's policy in accordance with the majority in the House. Harcourt remained Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Kimberley, a most kindly, moderate, patient and sensible Liberal, became Minister for Foreign Affairs.

During Lord Rosebery's brief reign as Prime Minister, in which he principally distinguished himself by achieving the height of his ambition by winning the Derby while presiding over the destinies of England, I had another short innings at the Foreign Office. Lord Kimberley's second son, Armine Wodehouse, was a friend of mine, and as his father took him on as Private Secretary, he asked me to act as unpaid Assistant Private Secretary, which I was delighted to do. Henry Foley, of the Foreign Office, was précis writer and we all shared the large

room next to that of the Secretary of State known as the Private Secretary's room. We made an excellent *ménage à trois* : Armine dealt with the bulk and the most important part of his father's correspondence, Henry Foley with all matters of ceremonial and personal affairs relating to the office, while I dealt with minor personal matters and also docketed and put by a great part of the Cabinet and other letters for which Armine prepared replies or wrote replies at his father's dictation. We had no stenographers or typists in those days and everything was done in longhand—Lord Kimberley himself writing out letters to important correspondents, which one of the three of us had to copy.

Lord Kimberley acted as buffer between the two contending factions in the Cabinet, and what made the greatest impression on me at that time was the ceaseless wrangling over all questions of foreign politics between the Prime Minister and Sir William Harcourt, who both seemed to think that it was up to them to conduct the foreign policy of the country, and that poor Lord Kimberley was no more than a kind of sausage machine to turn out of their conflicting ideas an agreeable food for the British public. I admired Lord Kimberley's tactful and patient handling of these two fiery antagonists of the Ministry, but it was clear to me, when Lord Rosebery sent in a memorandum of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a marginal note in his writing (I can see it before my eyes now) "*Can la Bêtise humaine* further go—*R.*"—he always initialled with the monogram *R.*, if I remember right—the Government could not last very much longer and that, consequently, I also should very soon be released from a not altogether satisfactory situation. In this I was not mistaken, for in June, 1895, Lord Rosebery's Government resigned, after being defeated in a General Election, and the Conservatives, with Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, returned to office, which they held for ten years.

Two slight incidents fixed themselves on my memory during that time at the Foreign Office.

On one occasion when I was working alone in the room, Lord Rosebery suddenly appeared. He was agitated and not in the best of humours. He asked where Lord Kimberley was, where Armine Wodehouse was, where Henry Foley was, when they would be back, etc., and said he would wait for the Secretary of State. He began pacing up and down the room with his hands behind his back, looking like Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon* on the way to St. Helena. He was not lacking in a certain histrionic power on these occasions and I could not help wondering if he did not feel that he was on his way to his own St. Helena, and was playing up to the situation. I remained standing out of respect to the Prime Minister, who had not sat down. He told me I might sit down and go on with my work, which I tried to do but found myself too fascinated by that pacing figure to think of anything else. He never spoke and the silence could have been cut with a knife. I prayed almost audibly for Lord Kimberley's return. At last he came back and Lord Rosebery without a word passed into his room. That was the only *tête-à-tête* I was ever privileged to have with Lord Rosebery. His Government fell shortly after. I saw him again occasionally at large parties, when he was resplendent in his blue ribbon and diamond garter, but he never paid the slightest attention to me, which I attributed at the time to his dislike of men with beards, especially, I think, reddish, backwoodsmen beards like mine, for he was always extraordinarily carefully groomed himself. I imagine, however, that he never truly realised my existence, and if I was but a pebble by the road to him, he remained, to my chagrin, for I should have liked to have known him better, not even a "primrose by the river's brink" to me.¹

I hope I am not doing him an injustice, but Lord Rosebery has ever seemed to me like a highly polished eighteenth century snuff-box of onyx and lapis lazuli, set with cunningly wrought gold and diamonds, filled with perfumed snuff, which would be opened on special

¹ The Rosebery family name is of course Primrose.

occasions and produce highly scented snuff in the shape of epigrams. He had certainly the highly polished light-reflecting surface which the eighteenth century loved, but which Sir Edwin Lutyens rightly warns us against as a form of decoration. Of him perhaps more than of anyone it may be said, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Which of us in this world hath his heart's desire, and which of us, having it is therewith content? He achieved his three ambitions: was Prime Minister, married a great heiress, and won the Derby, and was he therewith content?

The other incident comes back to me with peculiar enjoyment. .

There was a large reception at the Foreign Office. We were all in uniform. I was told off to meet a Spanish Prince at the small private entrance of the Foreign Office, bring him up the private stairs, let Lord Kimberley know so that he could come down the main stairs to meet him in the corridor and, finally, I had to order the band to strike up the Spanish National Anthem.

It was a cold, rainy night, and I was suffering from a heavy cold. Not wishing to wait at the open door, I therefore asked the old doorkeeper to let me know as soon as the Prince's carriage arrived, so that I could go down to receive him at the door. Suddenly the doorkeeper burst into the room where I was waiting and said breathlessly: "He's here, he's come." I told him to take me to him at once, and he showed me a little man in a military uniform with big boots that looked anything but Spanish. Rushing to him I apologised that no one had met him and said that Lord Kimberley would be down the stairs shortly to greet him. I went to sign to the band to strike up the Spanish National Anthem, and also ran up to the Secretary of State and got him to come down. All the people gathered to see what was the *rara avis* that was causing so much fuss. Lord Kimberley came slowly down the stairs and I ran to my little man who had by this time been relieved of his heavy military coat. I bowed and said:

"*Monseigneur, le Secrétaire d'Etat est là prêt à vous recevoir.*"

The Spanish anthem boomed louder and louder, but my little friend seemed singularly shy and unwilling to leave the seclusion of the cloakroom. He was speechless. But I couldn't keep Lord Kimberley waiting, so I took hold of his arm and literally dragged him out of hiding and almost carried him to the Secretary of State. Pleased with my success, I said to Lord Kimberley :

"His Royal Highness the Infant Don . . ."

Then at last my small friend recovered the use of his tongue and stammered out :

"*Mais je ne suis pas une Altesse Royale. Je suis le second Attaché Militaire russe.*"

He wasn't even the first.

He turned and dived into the crowd leaving Lord Kimberley and me, and the band still playing the Spanish National Anthem. I made hurried excuses to Lord Kimberley and stopped the band. The Secretary of State slowly climbed the stairs again and the crowd smiled audibly.

When the show was over, the Secretary of State, Armine Wodehouse and I all met for some refreshment in the Private Secretary's room. I confounded myself in excuses but was able to give such an account of the adventure that Lord Kimberley laughed aloud. He had, fortunately, a sense of humour which did not stop short even in regard to little failures of his subordinates. I thanked heaven it was not Lord Rosebery I had to deal with, for he would never have forgiven having been made ridiculous *coram publico*.

I was glad to be in the Foreign Office at that time because Edward Grey was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, a very responsible position when the Secretary of State was in the House of Lords. In this way I got to know him better than before, and he would sometimes talk "shop" to me even outside the walls of the Foreign Office. My respect and admiration for his character and his restrained and balanced outlook on world affairs

grew continually. I met him frequently shooting and fishing in the house of our mutual friend, Vernon Watney, He reminded me of the ideal characters of old Rome, such as Cincinnatus, who after serving his country in the highest degree, only desired to return to his farm and live the simple life of a countryman. No one I have ever met in political life has had quite the same attraction for me, though I cannot say I ever knew him really intimately—very few had that privilege.

If Lord Rosebery appeared to my mind's eye in the guise of a highly-polished eighteenth century snuff-box, Edward Grey always took the form of a granite column, smooth but not polished so as to reflect the things about him for he was the most genuine man I ever met. I cannot imagine him ever imitating anyone. Though he was a granite column there was hidden within it a vein of gold and, though it may seem incompatible with granite, he had a keen sense of humour. Perhaps I am prejudiced but I infinitely prefer his writing to Lord Rosebery's polished style, and I believe that Grey's *Charm of Birds* will outlive thousands of more learned and more profound books, just as Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler* is probably to-day more read than Hobbes's *Leviathan* or than Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. *The Charm of Birds* is a perfect piece of English prose and deals in a true English spirit with a subject that appeals to most English hearts.

CHAPTER VIII

“LIFE AND LABOUR OF THE PEOPLE OF LONDON”

(1895)

AFTER leaving the Foreign Office in June, 1895, I received a proposal to do some unpaid work which, since it seemed likely to be very interesting, I accepted with alacrity. A friend of mine, George Duckworth, was working with Mr. Charles Booth on his great work, the *Life and Labour of the People of London*. Knowing my admiration for Mr. Booth, he asked me if, now that I had nothing definite to do, I would join with a number of other young men who were working at the office without remuneration.

In the office, besides Duckworth, later Sir George, who distinguished himself in the Government service in various capacities, there was also Hubert Llewellyn Smith (now Sir Hubert) who was afterwards General Secretary of the Ministry of Munitions during the War, Chief Economic Adviser to H.M. Government from 1919 to 1927, and Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade from 1907 to 1919. There were further two or three others who did the same sort of work which George Duckworth and I did and two clerks, Mr. Argyll and Mr. Arkell, who looked after the purely statistical and clerical work respectively.

The work I was given to do was as follows : Certain industries were allotted to me to investigate. Thus I remember during the time I was in the office I dealt with China and Glass, Brush-making, Musical Instruments, Leather, Matches, Rubber, Paints and Varnishes. Being told which I was to begin on, I had, with the help of the

London Directory, to write letters to managers of factories situated in London to ask, on behalf of *Life and Labour*, of which some description was given and the objects of which were declared to be, as they were, completely non-political and merely for purposes of scientific investigation, whether I might be allowed to call on them and obtain from them such information as to the Life and Labour of those employed as they might be willing to give. The answers we received were various. Some were definitely rude, others lukewarm, a few welcomed our investigation, many never answered at all. However, in each industry we were able to find some firms who were both friendly and communicative.

Having obtained what information we could from the employers we next addressed ourselves to secretaries of unions, to working men's clubs in the district where the factories under investigation were situated, to clergymen, Nonconformist ministers and Catholic priests as well as to social institutions ; in fact, to anyone we could think of who would be likely to help.

It was indeed most absorbing work. The figures we assembled were put into proper shape by Mr. Argyll who passed them on to Mr. Booth who, going over our written reports of our experiences and co-ordinating them with figures obtained from us and from other sources, edited the reports and gave its final shape to each chapter of the book.

I have never met anyone like Mr. Booth for reading a living meaning into rows of figures. It was clear that they evidently conveyed to him definite pictures while, I confess, to me they always were figures and nothing more. The interesting part of the work to me was always the contact with human beings, whether directors of companies or managers of factories, secretaries of trade unions or foremen or workmen in factories, clergymen of poor parishes in the remotest parts of East and South London, or boys in boys' clubs or girls in the match and other factories. I was suddenly plunged into a totally new world whose aims and interests, whose outlook on

life in general were as completely different from those of the people I had hitherto consorted with as chalk is from cheese. Yet I quickly realised that we were all of the same stuff when we got down to bed-rock. So I was able to make friends wherever I went, and I gathered from the experiences a sense of the basic solidarity of human interests, if only men would learn to put the community first and their own individual desiderata second.

I admired above all the patience and immense generosity of the poor towards each other and their heroic readiness to accept cheerfully the hardest buffetings of fate.

If I had gone into this job something of a "Socialist Salvationist" I came out much confirmed in my ideas that the present state of society was far from perfect, that there was indeed much that was "rotten in the State of Denmark," that our old so-called "economic laws" which inculcated *laissez-faire* and the higgling of the market led to every kind of poverty and misery as well as to great riches for the few, to overcrowding and abominable housing in great cities where the economic factor was everything and the life of the people as nothing in comparison with one per cent. more in profits; where an industry, because for the moment it was considered "uneconomic," must be allowed to perish, and with it hundreds of families of well-to-do craftsmen and workmen to fall from comparative ease through no fault of their own into what was called the "submerged tenth."

One example of this at that time occurs to me now with particular force.

We had always had in London a small but flourishing and highly efficient body of glass-blowers, good craftsmen in the best sense of the word. While they made, if required, high-class artistic glass, the industry, composed mainly of small firms employing two or three score of men, relied for the most part for its existence on the production of small, cheap bottles for medicines, etc.

This particular branch of the industry had been directly undermined by the importation of machine-made bottles from Belgium and Germany produced in the mass.

The result was that our glass-blowing industry had gradually been pushed out of the market, and hundreds of very intelligent and efficient workmen were being yearly reduced to starvation, together with their families. Those that were still working realised that this fate awaited them in a short time, while the masters were naturally anxious to save every penny they could invest for the future, knowing that their turn must come shortly for shutting up shop. None, however, had the capital required to start factories with new machinery that could compete with the Belgian and German producers. All apparently that could be done was to await the end stoically. That, at least, was all that was being done.

I deeply regretted the disappearance of this ancient London craft. The workshops of the glass-blowers presented one of the most picturesque sights imaginable, especially towards evening when darkness was setting in.

They were for the most part situated in low, long cellar-like rooms, with furnaces in the centre and cauldrons filled with molten glass which, when opened, gave a most lurid red glare to the smoke-darkened walls and ceilings and to the begrimed half-naked men. These inserted their long blow-pipes into the mass of molten glass to inflate and form a bottle of the size required. When twenty or thirty men were all swinging their pipes and opening and shutting the furnaces this produced such a play of bright light and deep shadow that only a Rembrandt could have done justice to it.

I suppose they are all gone now, submerged by the mass of foreign machine-made goods. I wondered then as I wonder now whether the policy of leaving our own people to be swept off like dirt because cheaper foreign goods, owing to some new mechanical device or to cheaper wages abroad, undercut our production was

really such a benefit as our economists have preached since the time of John Stuart Mill and Ricardo and others. I wondered then as I wonder now whether it wouldn't have served the country and the people as a whole better to have established some control, some method to enable our hard hit industries to survive until they could be put on their feet again and able to compete successfully with their foreign invaders. But, no—the word had gone forth that *laissez-faire* was to rule in our country at least, that the more we bought from abroad the better it would be because foreigners would then be compelled to buy from us to establish the balance of trade. The great thing to aim at was to establish the free flow and interchange of goods, no matter what suffering this might cause our people at home. Let goods be exchanged no matter what happened to the men. That absurd creature, the economic man, was to take the place of the man of flesh and blood who might at any moment be reduced to starvation for the sake of a pedantic theory of world trade.

I left the office of *Life and Labour* still less of a Free Trader than I was when I went in. People seemed to me from then on to count much more than riches derived without control from foreign trade, no matter at what cost to flesh and blood.

One or two other industries which I was asked to investigate filled me, I must confess, with indignation at the conditions obtaining therein. One of these was the match industry where for want of elementary care hundreds of workers were attacked yearly by that hideous disease, "phossy-jaw," which gradually ate away the bones of its victims. The owners of factories put this down to the carelessness and lack of cleanliness among workpeople. That may have been the case, but it seems to me that the greater responsibility rested with those who paid the lowest possible wages to their workpeople, and then did not see to it, by means of strict supervision, that the most elementary rules for the maintenance of their health were properly enforced. The rules were indeed

made but, so far as I remember, little care was taken to insist on their being followed.

The same was the case in the paint and varnish-making industries where white lead-poisoning after a certain period was looked upon as almost inevitable. Men, after a few years, dropped out for a week or two in hospital, then returned to work, and after some time went back to hospital with ever shorter intervals at the factory until at last they returned no more. Here again this was attributed to the carelessness and dirty habits of the workmen who would not always wash their hands before meals. Basins with running water and soap were provided, but there was no supervision to see that the workpeople conformed to the rules. It was their look-out if they got white lead-poisoning and, anyway, there were many more where they came from. Strict supervision would mean expense, and expense would reduce dividends, and that was what really mattered.

As to the Government insisting on more than washing facilities being provided, that would never do. It would be a gross violation of *laissez-faire* and all the gospel dear to the Liberal economists of the day—not to speak of the Conservatives—and would handicap us in competing with foreign manufacturers.

So I became more and more an ardent supporter of restriction of Free Trade, which has been well called the doctrine of the Free Fox in the Free Henhouse. It could often be shown that these free imports were definitely damaging the life and labour of a section of our people. I was in favour, therefore, of more drastic Government intervention whenever this appeared necessary to safeguard the health of our workmen when these, owing to lack of education in these matters, were unable to look after themselves.

Particularly in the case of such unhealthy occupations as matches and paint and varnish were in those days, it has seemed to me that companies should, wherever possible, spend money on research work for the discovery of remedies and prophylactics rather than “point with

pride " to increasing dividends when their workmen were liable to be victims of hideous diseases quite as much owing to the convenient *laissez-faire* doctrines of their employers as to any carelessness on their own part.

These particular abuses have, I hope and believe, been remedied since those days, but the capitalist spirit which rates dividends as of more importance than flesh and blood is still in being, that spirit against which Hood protested when he wrote the "Song of the Shirt," and Elizabeth Barrett Browning when she wrote her wonderful poem against the employment of young children in factories :

Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years.

And, above all, that most bitter of all poems by Heinrich Heine entitled *Die Weber*—"The Weavers"—with its tremendous fourfold curse against God, against the King, against the country, against the world, a poem which I have never seen in English, but which has been powerfully translated into Italian by Carducci under the title of the "Tessitori." The "Song of the Shirt" and the "Cry of the Children" have helped to force Parliament to intervene in these matters. That much a poet can sometimes accomplish. He can stir up some reformer like Lord Shaftesbury to bring about changes which all the economists of the time would probably have considered as gross infractions of the divine law of *laissez-faire*. As to Heine's poem I doubt if that could bring about any change but a revolution led by men and women driven to despair by the economists and the seekers after dividends.

Another feature of industrial life at that time which still continued almost undiminished filled me with alarm for the future. This was the unavoidable conflict in a purely capitalistic state of society between the two factors of industry, Labour and Capital. It is quite unnecessary

to accept all Karl Marx's theories and conclusions in order to see that so long as Capital, seeking for dividends, and for dividends only, is the predominant partner in the business in which Labour is, to say the least, equally if not more important, this conflict must go on. And yet we know that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Is then this problem to solve itself by endless strikes and lock-outs, by communist revolutions, and by the complete suppression of individual liberty by communist doctrinaires and pedants, or can we not evolve a system by which these two necessary partners can work together for each other's good and for that of the community as a whole?

All these things considered I formulated an economic credo more or less along the following lines, to which credo I still adhere to-day :

1. I believe that Labour and Capital are both necessary for the production of the goods needed by a civilised world, but of these two, Labour is the more important, for without it Capital would be like a bag of pearls and diamonds found in a desert by a thirsty man.

2. I believe that the system followed since the introduction of Capitalism on a large scale as a result of the use of machinery, whereby Capital has become in most cases the dominant and deciding partner, is contrary to nature.

3. I believe that this system must inevitably lead, if not modified, to the revolt of Labour and the adoption of crude Marxist doctrines, as false and unfortunate in their way as the undiluted doctrines of the economists of the last century have proved themselves to be.

4. I believe that the only just and equitable solution of our present Labour problems lies in the open and frank acknowledgment of the equal rights of Labour, not only to a proportionate share in the profits made by Capital and Labour working together, but also to a share in the administration of any company or firm hitherto carried on on accepted Capitalist principles, i.e. without admitting Labour's rights in these two respects.

5. I believe that this may be accomplished for the benefit of all concerned, and of the country at large, if all Capitalist undertakings will allot to their employees not only a certain proportion of Ordinary Shares carrying a right to dividends, but also the right to elect a proportionate number of Labour members to the Board of Management on exactly the same footing as the Capitalist members. The Labour shares must, of course, be entirely personal and held only by virtue of occupation in the concern, and be non-transferable and non-saleable.

6. I believe that, while a plan on some such lines as the above may result, and probably will result at first in a diminution of dividends for the Capitalist shareholders, it is evident that the Labour shareholders, who to say the least, would be equally interested in the efficient management of the concern, will see to it that the money invested is not wasted, and that the business is efficiently run so far as this is humanly possible.

7. I believe that the harmony which would ensue between the hitherto conflicting partners in production would in the end more than compensate the Capitalist shareholders for any loss they might suffer at the first start from the adoption of a plan of this kind.

8. I believe that the advantages to the country at large by eliminating strikes, lock-outs and ca' canny would be incalculable.

I do not know if any plan of this kind has yet been tried on a large scale in any part of the world. But even if it has, and had failed at first, that would not prove that it must always fail, for common sense is in it.

This is not profit-sharing to which there are some obvious objections, neither is it communism. It simply raises Labour to its proper place in the economy of industry and production.

For Mr. Charles Booth, whom I came to know well during the months I worked in his office, I began to feel not only the highest respect but also a real affection. I rarely met a man so utterly unself-seeking. He not only had an extraordinary natural gift, as already stated,

for clothing with flesh and blood the statistical skeletons that his office turned out, but the corporate beings thus produced were real beings and not the fictions of economists working fanatically to prove some preconceived theory of social structure.

He was also a most cultivated man with a wide knowledge and appreciation of literature and an excellent and hospitable host. Mrs. Booth, a Macaulay by birth, and a woman of singular charm, helped to make their house in Great Cumberland Place for me then and later one of the most agreeable in London.

Another man with whom the months I spent in London, both at the Foreign Office and at *Life and Labour*, brought me into closer contact than I had ever been before was my cousin Auberon Herbert, the younger brother of Carnarvon and Alan Herbert.

Auberon was a most unusual person. Very gifted and with, to me and to most people who were acquainted with him, a special charm coming perhaps from the old-world courtesy peculiar to all that branch of the Herberts, his ideas were yet so revolutionary and subversive and his habits so unconventional that he had dropped almost entirely out of the society of his own class. He was indeed so pronounced an individualist as to be almost an anarchist. He was, of course, a violent opponent of Government control or interference of any kind. Having been a very smart cavalry officer in his youth, he had become a fanatical pacifist and had on one occasion to fly before an irate patriotic mob in Hyde Park whom he had attempted to convert too rapidly to his ideas. Indeed, he only saved himself by climbing the high railings that surround the park and leaving, I was told, a large part of his trousers on the spikes, to the huge delight of his pursuers.

He had a mania for woollen clothing and spent a great part of the day in pulling on or stripping off knitted grey woollen jerseys. He always travelled with his own Jaeger blankets and would sleep in nothing else; he also had a passion for airing them. So much was this the case

that once, being on my way through Athens, I looked up at the upper stories of one of the principal hotels, and seeing the balcony of one room hung, not with tapestries as in the Renaissance for a *fiesta*, but with large Jaeger blankets, I went in, asked for Auberon Herbert and was immediately taken up to his room.

I used to go from London in the summer and spend week-ends with him occasionally at his quaint house in the New Forest, a remote place originally, I suppose, the property of some squatter, where I used to see his most delightful son Bron,¹ and daughter Nan,² then quite young.

Once we all (Auberon, Nan and I) went out camping in the forest in tents. The weather was lovely, but as I had to get back early on the Monday morning to London, Auberon decided we must break up our camp on Sunday evening so as to be able to start in good time from his house next day. Nan, who was about ten years old, begged to be left alone in the tent, but this Auberon would not allow, saying she might be attacked by gipsies.

"But I shall be quite safe," said Nan, "I've got a dagger."

On that occasion for once Auberon took the conventional line, and she had to pack and come back with us, to her great annoyance.

Auberon, then about fifty I suppose, suddenly thought he would learn to play the fiddle. One moonlight night I heard the most unearthly sounds from the garden, and looking out saw Auberon, wrapped in woollen sweaters and Jaeger rugs, sitting on a chair in an open space that passed for a lawn, sawing away on his fiddle with astonishing energy. It was a delightful sight, but the sounds were more like the moans and shrieks of a tortured animal than anything before produced from a musical instrument.

We had, of course, tremendous arguments about individualism and State socialism, but never convinced each other and always remained the best of friends.

¹ Later Lord Lucas, killed as an aviator during the War.

² Now Lady Lucas in her own right.

Strange and unconventional to the last, I believe he determined to show the power of the will over the flesh by dying standing up. I missed him greatly when at last he passed away.

Looking back over past years, few things seem more strange than the way in which unexpected meetings have altered the course of my life.

One of the industries I investigated for *Life and Labour* was the rubber business, just then beginning to show signs of what it might become in the future. It was thus I met with Christian Gray, manager of the great Silvertown rubber works, a man with a splendid physique, a head like a Van Dyck portrait, and a brilliant mind. He at once took an interest in *Life and Labour*, perhaps because he knew of Mr. Charles Booth as a shipping magnate and partner in the firm which shared with another Liverpool family, the Brocklehursts, all the carrying trade between England, New York and Para and Manaos on the Amazon, which at that time had a practical monopoly of the production of rubber.

However that may be, Gray proved the most communicative, as he was also one of the ablest, among the business men I met at that time. A man who looked into the future not only with regard to his own business but also to the general economic situation of the world. From him, during the many talks we had together, I absorbed many of the ideas I have formulated in my Economic Credo. But also I learnt about the tremendous potentialities of rubber in the future. Rubber then was only just beginning to be used for the purposes with which every child is familiar to-day, and if one mentioned rubber in a drawing-room in the early eighteen-nineties as a product that would probably revolutionise life in a few years, people opened their eyes and said :

“What, do you mean that stuff that is used for rubbing out pencil marks ?”

This was literally almost the only use as yet generally known, though it had already begun to come into fashion for solid rubber tyres for bicycles.

Christian Gray, however, in the year 1895 clearly saw what was coming, and told me that the then supply of rubber from wild trees was not nearly sufficient for the world's needs, and that unless it was found possible to plant rubber profitably there would be a great shortage before long. Whoever, therefore, succeeded in planting rubber trees and producing a good quality of rubber would probably realise a considerable fortune. This made a great impression on me. I could not look forward with joy to settling down to any business in London, because it was to me always something of a prison house; I had no country home beyond my mother's cottage on Bassenthwaite, which gave me no occupation; I loved the tropics, and as rubber grew most in Brazil, Central America and Mexico, it seemed only reasonable to hope that it would grow in the British West Indies.

As stated before, the West Indies had for a long time exercised a fascination over my mind, partly because of the long connection of my mother's family with Jamaica, partly owing to recent books I had read about them and their present condition of utter penury and distress owing to the sugar estates having gone out of cultivation. What could be a more delightful plan for a young man at a loose end than to start a new industry in an impoverished part of the British Empire, while at the same time making a little money for himself and his friends? This was how the question presented itself to me.

I discussed it with Mr. Charles Booth, who quite agreed with Gray's diagnosis of the future prospects of rubber, and, kind as always, said he would offer me and a friend a free passage to the Amazons and back during the next rubber "tapping season" if I liked to study the methods of working on the spot. I need hardly say I jumped at this offer and at once consulted my mother, who, though she did not like my going to a part of the world which was supposed to be, and was, infected with malaria and yellow fever, yet was interested in the scheme for the resuscitation of the West Indies.

The journey to the Amazon was settled for that very

August, 1895, and I asked an old Harrow friend, George Crawley (the only member of his family whom I could ever beat at racquets), to come with me and he at once accepted.

So all was prepared for the next adventure.

CHAPTER IX

JOURNEY TO THE AMAZON FOR THE STUDY OF THE RUBBER INDUSTRY

(1895)

WHEN I said at the end of the last chapter that all was set for the next adventure, I should rather have said that the stage was set for the next act. Indeed, my outlook on life had been so changed by my work for *Life and Labour* that I set out on my rubber investigation journey with very different objects or, I may say, ideals from those with which I sailed for South Africa in 1891. Then, while I hoped to play a part in the great schemes of Empire development on the lines initiated by Rhodes, I also hoped to make a considerable fortune in gold-mining, as Rhodes and others had done some years before on the Rand, and with the help of this fortune to enter Parliament and there play a part both for the greater glory of England and the Empire and for social reforms which I even then felt were long overdue.

Now, however, my ambitions were much watered down. I still indeed wanted to help on Empire development, but by a much more modest programme of assisting the economic recovery of the West Indies; while as regards myself, what I mainly desired was to make as much money as would enable me to buy a small property in a fruit-growing district in England and there to start a fruit farm on co-partnership lines such as I have sketched in my Economic Credo. Planting in England and planting in the West Indies were now the height of my ambitions, combined, let me add, with a happy marriage and a family and if possible, though this was not a *sine qua non*, a good trout stream. My ambitions, therefore, were much

reduced and by so much the better. I had learnt something from the Theatre of Life.

It was as stated, in August, 1895, that George Crawley and I set out in the highest spirits from Victoria Station to take the night boat from Southampton to Havre, where we were to pick up the Booth liner s.s. *Lanfranc*, bound for Para on the Amazon.

Only one thing at the last moment damped my ardour. My mother, always kind, had raised no objections to my leaving on this journey and I did not realise how much she had suppressed her feelings. But after she said good-bye to me at the station, as the train drew out, I looked out of the carriage window. I saw her turn slowly and move heavy-footed to the exit, and I realised suddenly that I was light-heartedly piercing her heart with a sword, that her health was failing, and that she feared she would never see me again. I made a mental vow that I would not leave her any more for a long journey such as my heart loved.

Having satisfied my conscience to this extent, and the die being now cast for Brazil for better, for worse, I did not allow any further thoughts to trouble the natural exhilaration of the start.

We reached Havre at the usual hour and put up at a little, old-fashioned hotel.

George, who was a great gourmet, had heard of a famous old restaurant on the quay where oysters and soles, lobsters and crabs were superb, and also where there was a particular brand of Burgundy which excelled anything to be got in Paris. We went there for lunch and it came up to all George's expectations. I don't think I ever tasted Burgundy like that before or since. But what impressed that luncheon on my mind most of all was that three tables away from us were seated Oscar Wilde and a friend. I had met Wilde once or twice at dinner at the house of Walter Harris's father.

Walter had much to tell me of the brilliant wit of that strange, unhappy being, but I confess I never heard him produce anything approaching an epigram. Whatever

he was mentally, physically I thought him revolting. A heavy body crowned by a large red face that looked as if it were made of raw beef steak and a loose pendulous mouth at once produced in me a wish never to see him again.

When I saw him afterwards at Havre, it was after his trial and after "*The Ballad of Reading Gaol*." He looked very tired, but to my eyes as revolting as ever. I pointed him out to George, who agreed in my appraisal of him. He, fortunately, did not recognise me, for if he had I should certainly have felt bound to return his greeting after all he had gone through. But it would have been a most disagreeable moment.

The *Lanfranc* came in that day and as she was to sail early next morning, we got on board. After dining at our restaurant and absorbing another bottle of the Burgundy to put us in good shape for the Bay, we joined the ship and only awoke to find her tossing about in the Bay in heavy water which got worse and worse as we reached the open sea. A truly bad experience of the Bay that was and poor George gave vent to his feelings in the berth below mine by good Harrovian abuse of me for having invited him into such a place of torment.

We landed at Oporto, a most delightful town, with houses faced with coloured tiles that gave it a particularly bright and clean look. While the boat was loading port wine for the Brazilians, we spent a night up at an enchanting little place in the hills called "*Bom Jesus*," by which time George had recovered from the Bay and was tasting every new dish and wine he came across.

From Oporto we went to Madeira and the Cape Verde Islands, landing at the barren volcanic island of St. Vincent instead of the other green and attractive looking islands, and thence straight on to Parà.

Some fifty miles out to sea before reaching the Brazilian coast at the mouth or rather mouths of the Amazon, a ship enters the chocolate-coloured fresh water flood of the Amazon, which is so powerful that it pushes the clear salt South Atlantic water that distance away from the

land. This was the first new natural phenomenon we noticed, and it was some hours after entering this fresh and muddy water that we first saw land. Parà is situated, not on the Amazon proper from which it is separated by many miles of swampy forest-covered islands and intricate narrow winding water ways, but on the Parà river, which at the mouth is considerably wider than, I suppose, any European river.

The city of Santa Maria do Belem do Parà, to give it its full name, lies on the equator and almost on a level with the river. It is necessary to go hundreds of miles up the Amazon before one strikes anything that can be called a hill—an eminence of one hundred feet in height is a matter for surprise. So flat indeed is the great forest area of the Amazon valley that we were told that in the flood season canoes can pass from the Amazon at Manaos, nearly nine hundred miles from the mouth, to the Orinoco without ever being taken out of the water.

Parà, owing to the great boom in wild rubber, was at that time in a state of feverish prosperity.

There were many ships lying in the river off the town and the quays were filled with goods of all sorts brought from Europe and the United States in exchange for this much prized product of the Amazon forests.

As we passed up the Parà river to the city, being most susceptible to smells of all kinds, I noticed first the smell of damp earth and decaying vegetation, varied occasionally with the pleasanter perfumes of heavily scented tropical flowers giving me the sensation of being in a truly exotic world. This was to grow to an almost overwhelming degree from the time we landed till the day we left the muddy waters of the Amazon again. Ultra-exotic is the only word to describe scenery, people, fauna, flora, everything in fact in this vast impenetrable part of the globe, where it is possible to form an idea of what much of the world must have looked like in prehistoric times.

On landing at Parà in a small tug-boat, because the river is so shallow that ocean steamers could not in those

days approach within about a mile of the quay, the first two things that struck me were the cleanliness of the white cotton jackets and trousers of all the dock labourers, who were, of course, either Indian or, in far larger numbers, Negroes, and two smells, the pungent and acrid smell of human sweat which poured out of the pores of all these workers, and, whenever I entered any office or shop, a peculiarly unpleasant stuffy and yet acrid smell which I could not at first account for. I found later that it was produced by millions of dark-grey flying cockroaches which infested every building that was not kept scrupulously clean. As soon as night set in these horrible creatures flew in at every open window where there was a light to be seen and committed suicide by hundreds against the arc lamps with which—great progress in civilisation—the city was already lighted.

Besides these things, another novel feature to me, but one which is so familiar to every traveller in tropical South America as never to be mentioned, was the ubiquitous turkey-buzzard—a small, shabby, black, bald-headed vulture which, tame as a London sparrow, hopped about the streets scavenging and cleaning up so far as it could all the filth which was thrown out into the gutter from every house.

There were squares and gardens where great Palma Real and mango trees predominated, with poor little patches of flower beds. There were great dark stores, where white clad men moved noiselessly about, pervaded by the stuffy smell of goods combined with the acrid smell of the filthy cockroaches, and there were small one-storied plastered houses painted respectively blue, pink or white with green shutters in the Portuguese fashion. There was also a large cathedral in a square surrounded by Palmas Reales, and somewhere, the inevitable theatre.

Such was in those days Santa Maria do Belem do Pará.

George and I were met by the Booth agent, Mr. Purcell, a most correct old gentleman whose white shirt and trousers were always spotlessly clean and whose black

alpaca jacket always looked cool. He lived with his spotlessly clean semi-Brazilian family, for he had married in Parà, in a spotlessly clean Brazilian house—one of the few places where I could not detect the presence of cockroaches. He passed our luggage through the Customs, put us into a very primitive carriage, and took us to the best hotel in the place which, though it smelt overpoweringly of cockroaches and though the turkey-buzzards found much to browse on in the court, had the merit of being kept by M. Felix, an excellent French *chef*.

While we were in his hotel there occurred the anniversary, I think, of Sedan or one of the great German victories of 1870. The German colony celebrated this so vigorously with wine and song in the hotel that George Crawley and I could not sleep in peace. Next day we remonstrated with M. Felix for his lack of patriotism. With twinkling eyes he asked us if we had ever eaten herring salad, a delicacy very near the German heart. I said I had, but what of that?

"Well," said M. Felix, "they wanted a herring salad and I made them one so full of salt and other thirst-provoking ingredients that they drank more than was good for them and, in this climate, that's bad for yellow fever."

I don't believe that M. Felix really had any such poisonous intentions and would only accuse him of doing all he legitimately could to lay by a good store of Brazilian dollars in order to buy himself a snug villa with a garden in his native country, but the fact was that when, after an absence of a month at Manaos, George Crawley and I returned to Parà we found an epidemic of yellow fever raging and were told that several of those who had celebrated Sedan were among the victims.

We spent about a week in Parà while Mr. Purcell very kindly made arrangements for us to visit the *Finca* or estate of some friends of his who owned a large property on one of the tributary rivers of the Parà, and had there a country house at which they would put us up. Here we should be able to see rubber trees being tapped and the rubber prepared for shipment.

A fleet of small steamers left Parà once or twice a week for each of the tributary rivers in the Province, and we took one of these to go to Boa Vista, the somewhat suburban name of the house we were bound for.

Our journey took, I think, about a night and a day. The steamer was a fairly large one for river work. Below deck, like everything in Amazonas, it smelt strongly of cockroaches, but above deck it was clean enough. It was crowded with passengers of every shade, from ebony to white, though there were but few of the latter. Like ourselves every passenger was provided with his or her own deck-chair and large cotton hammock, white, blue or pink being the predominating colours. The deck was protected from sun and rain by a metal awning supported by numerous stanchions with hooks on them at a certain height. To these hooks every passenger tied his or her hammock soon after the evening meal, for which we had perforce to go to the cockroachy dining-saloon below. Men, women and children slept promiscuously in their hammocks the whole length of the deck and their *toilette*, evening and morning, was curious and perfunctory.

Towards the evening of the following day we arrived at the landing-place for Boa Vista, not far from the house. The arrival of the weekly steamer was, of course, a matter of general interest and the little pier was crowded with Indian peons and negroes in their white cotton jackets and trousers, the negro women wearing red or blue flowers stuck in their woolly locks and generally some bright-coloured beads.

Our host and hostess met us at the pier with friendly greeting. Both were true white and she, unlike most Brazilian women, was, after some years of marriage and childbirth, still quite pretty.

The house was built on piles on the edge of the river which almost reached the veranda at high tide, but at low tide fell many feet, leaving steep banks of black and rather smelly mud bare to the eyes and nose. On the mud at low tide there generally collected hundreds of large sulphur-coloured butterflies which evidently found

it more to their taste than the great blue convolvuli and other flowers growing along the banks.

The house, a pleasant one, was of one story, with a large and shady veranda in front in which the family, father, mother, small children and guests, mainly lived. At the back were the sleeping-quarters, practically bare of furniture except the inevitable hooks on the walls from which hung hammocks, a table or two for toilet requisites, a terra-cotta jug and basin, and one or two rush-bottomed chairs. This was the same in every tropical Brazilian house we stayed in. The custom of expecting the guests to bring their own bedding seemed to me, in so hot a country where everybody lived and slept in a sort of Niagara of perspiration, most practical and pleasant.

George Crawley and I very soon had our hammocks and mosquito nets fixed up and our few necessities unpacked and went back to the veranda to join our host and discuss plans for the following day.

Our host and hostess spoke some French which made things easy as my Portuguese was very limited and George's was nil. We were to be taken out into the forest to see the *Seringueiros* (rubber tappers) at work the following day, and in the evening a great ball was to be given in our honour in a large room behind the house. This suited us very well.

I found, however, next day to my regret that, this having been an old sugar estate from which the wild forest had been cleared years ago, there was no rubber-tapping business on any scale, though here and there a *Hevea Brasiliensis* (the Brazilian rubber tree) had been spared, and was being tapped for the few pounds of rubber it would produce. While, therefore, I could learn something of the system of tapping and curing the latex, I could get no reliable statistics from the estate.

Next morning, very early, after a cup of black coffee and some bread and tinned butter, we started on mules accompanied by our host and the rubber-tappers on foot.

Apart from a few vegetable gardens round the huts of the ex-slaves the entire estate had gone back into the

wild state and was covered with secondary bush of no use or value. There were plenty of flowering shrubs and great blue and other bright butterflies which were interesting and beautiful, and here and there a patch of original forest with a rubber tree or two.

I need not describe the rubber-tapping and curing. Anyone can read about that in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; but one point interested me particularly about the Hevea tree. This was that these tappers said it was useless to expect any satisfactory flow of latex from a tree unless it was flooded to three or four feet up its trunk in the wet season. This was afterwards confirmed by every Brazilian *seringueiro* I spoke to and this finally decided me against planting the Brazilian hevea tree in the West Indies where, of course, such a condition was unobtainable.

George and I, unaccustomed to so much exercise on so slight a foundation as a cup of black coffee and a roll, returned famished at midday and thought the Brazilian country meal of *baccalao* (salted cod) boiled with a garniture of great red peppers, with manioca root for bread, of stewed kid with potatoes and the inevitable small black beans cooked in lard, and some kind of ultra-sweet cake to finish with, washed down by excellent Portuguese red wine, and water from the great terra-cotta water-coolers standing in the shade of the veranda, quite the best food we had ever tasted. After this our hosts suggested a siesta, and we all retired to our hammocks till the cool of the evening.

Then we returned to the veranda and watched the guests arriving for the ball in their canoes: darkies of all ages and sizes, from old grey heads of eighty to babies of a few days. The small babies were all laid out in a row in a corridor and expected to sleep. The elder children ran about and got into trouble, and the rest amused themselves successfully by conversation till the ball began. All were dressed in the most spotless white cotton, and the women had red and white flowers pinned into their tight curls and coloured beads round their necks and arms.

They had brought their own supper and sat about in groups eating, drinking and laughing.

My host said we would let them start the ball, have our supper when it was dark, and then go in to see the dancing. So about eight we went into the big ball-room which was brightly lighted by large paraffin lamps hung from the ceiling. Dancing had already begun, but was still in the early and very respectable stages. The orchestra consisted of two concertinas and two drums, assisted by the voices of the dancers who sang and shouted vigorously. The music was of the curious minor syncopated kind which is natural to negroes and has now been bastardized by jazz. It was accompanied by clapping of hands and stamping of feet in rhythm.

The dances were something like our Sir Roger de Coverley, men and women facing each other in long files all down the room, and taking it in turns apparently when the spirit impelled them to go through all sorts of curious gyrations and complicated figures with feet, hands and arms, while the rest kept time stamping with their naked feet on the boarded floor and beating their hands together. Each dance seemed to last for as long as the musicians could keep it up. It was truly an exotic sight, the black, perspiring faces, with gleaming white teeth of the dancers all dressed in white, the curious syncopated music, the violent shadows thrown by the lamps overhead. But the strangest part was to come.

After about two hours of this something happened. One of the leading men made an announcement; a great hush fell on the assembly, and all trooped out to a little church, the old church of the estate still occasionally used if a priest came to celebrate Mass on Sundays. Those who could not enter squatted outside while those that had them got out their beads and began saying the Rosary.

I asked my host what was the matter. He said that one of the small babies that had never been baptized had been found in convulsions and might die and was, therefore, to be baptized, in accordance with the laws of

the Church, by one of the men present, there being no priest to perform the ceremony. We went into the church and waited. Presently the child, which was already *in articulo mortis*, was brought in and held by its mother at the font. The leader started the Litany of the Blessed Virgin to which all replied on their knees. When that was finished the leader took water from the font and baptized the child, after which some further prayers were recited, the Rosary said, and hymn sung. This done, all joyfully rose from their knees and trooped back to the dancing hall.

Then to encourage the somewhat damped ardour of the dancers our host had served out little tots of a raw spirit locally made, and from that moment the evening became more and more lively, until it developed into a real African orgy of frenzied dancing and song always to the syncopated beating of the kettle-drums, just like that which I remembered hearing up in the kopjes of Mashonaland on moonlight nights. I have been told by an American evangelist preacher that much the same happens at revivalist meetings in the West Indies and he added: "They generally end in sin and a crop of babies next year." George and I watched, fascinated. From time to time, tired of the din and the acrid smell of perspiring negro bodies, we went out into the moonlight where the air was heavy with the scent of the white tropical flowers mixed with the smell of the mud from the river, but we came back again and again, unable to tear ourselves away from the unusual scene of "revelry by night." Our host and hostess had gone to their hammocks long ago. Little by little the revellers dropped out and, wrapping themselves in their blankets, went and lay down on the ground round the house under the shadows of some great mango tree so as to avoid the rays of the moon. The concertinas had given up long before, and the kettle-drums began at last to show signs of weariness, and finally, two or three hours before dawn, the fête collapsed.

Before George and I woke the next morning all the dancers had departed in their canoes and left no traces of

their presence. The memory of that night is like a curious dream, and no other ball, whether in a royal palace or a tenants' ball in the Highlands with bagpipes and kilts, or at Budapest with resplendent Magyar uniforms, has left such a vivid impression on my mind as that strange festivity of the ex-slaves at Boa Vista by the muddy Amazon tributary.

The next day the steamer for Pará came down the river on its return journey, and we left our kind host and hostess with very sincere feelings of gratitude for their real and pleasant hospitality.

I had not learnt much about rubber-tapping, but I soon gathered at Pará that it would be necessary to go much farther afield if I was to get any reliable information.

George Crawley and I therefore determined to go on about nine hundred miles up the main Amazon River to Manãos whither, it was arranged that we could go in the next Booth steamer from England, which would be more agreeable from every point of view and quicker than taking one of the local Brazilian steamers which were extremely primitive. We had to wait about ten or twelve days before the next Booth liner for Manãos arrived, so two young English friends we had met in Pará, one George Brocklehurst of the Liverpool ship-owning family, and another named Astlet, arranged for us to go with a Brazilian friend of theirs, Dom Pedro de Miranda, in his sailing yacht across to the island of Marajò which lies between the Amazon and Pará Rivers and faces the open Atlantic. Here Dom Pedro owned several thousands of acres on which he had three or four large cattle ranches. We were told we could shoot there to our heart's content, which pleased George Crawley who was not so infected with my enthusiasm for rubber, and it was also attractive to me. Therefore, as soon as possible, we got ready with guns, rifles and cartridges and joined Pedro de Miranda in the *Dom Pedrito*, his sailing yacht of about thirty tons or so, built in the United States. Dom Pedro was a handsome young man of good family who had spent some time in Europe and spoke French fluently. He ran

his own estates efficiently and was well off. He was most agreeable and hospitable; he sailed his own yacht, was a keen shot and horseman, and though very smart in appearance while in Parà he quickly became the complete rancher when at home in Marajò.

As soon as we were out of sight of land he pulled down the Brazilian flag from the mast and hoisted another. I asked what this meant.

"Whenever I can," he answered, "I hoist the Imperial Brazilian flag, for my family were all adherents of the Emperor, but I can't, of course, fly it under the eyes of the authorities."

That was the only vestige of loyalty to the *ancien régime* I came across in Brazil, and no one could say it was dangerous. Yet no one, so far as I know, had a bad word for old Dom Pedro, the Emperor. It merely seemed as if everyone had agreed that an Emperor was out of place in Brazil.

Marajò is, if I remember right, about half as large as Ireland, and we had to go a good way down the Parà River and then coast round the island for many hours before we reached Dom Pedro's ranch, about twenty-four hours' sail. Though we never really left the mouth of the Parà River it was like the open sea, the trade wind was strong and the sea fairly heavy, but it was cool and pleasant; there were no insects, and we could dress or undress as we pleased. The crew consisted of three or four negroes, including the cook who was, if not a *cordón bleu*, at least very much better than any in Parà except M. Felix.

When we arrived at the pier of the ranch we were surprised to see saddled oxen waiting for us. Dom Pedro explained that owing to the marshy character of the island, which was as flat as a table and broken up by great marshes, which became only partly dry in the dry season, it was more practical to ride oxen than horses at most times of the year. They were stronger and cleverer at extracting themselves from the sticky mud over which even in the dry season they often had to pass. We might

have ridden to his house on horses, but he thought that it would be more *couleur locale* to give us the ordinary mount of the place. We later on had some ox-racing which amused us considerably. This was the only time in my life I ever acted as jockey.

The vegetation here was very different from that round Parà and higher up the river. Trees of the acacia type abounded; there was no forest proper, though occasionally belts of fairly high trees and plenty of scrub with flowering shrubs. The house was the usual one-storied dried mud building, with a large veranda, where we lived by day and slept by night in our hammocks and mosquito-nets, though, on account of the continual trade wind there were, considering the marshy nature of the island, not too many insect pests there. Life was really most agreeable on this equatorial island. We were up at dawn, and after the coffee and bread to which, as Englishmen, we were allowed to add a fresh egg or two, George and I daily went off on some shooting expedition. The creeks and marshes on the estate were full of alligators, some of which were almost as large as the Pungwe River crocodiles. Two or three times, feeling ourselves public benefactors—for these alligators were very dangerous to Dom Pedro's horses and cattle—George and I were given canoes and two negroes each, to go up these alligator-infested creeks with instructions to kill all we could find. It was quite exciting work at first. The creeks were narrow, with black, muddy banks and so overhung with bamboos and trees as to be in perpetual twilight. The heat was terrific, as we were sheltered from the trade wind, and the mosquitoes were very bad. Our negroes paddled quickly up the winding creek till at some turn we caught sight of the eyes and nose of an alligator, often not more than twenty or thirty yards away, which was lying on the top of the water but only showing this small target. Then quickly we fired, each taking it in turn to go ahead. If the beast was killed it sank outright and we never knew whether it had been hit or not, but if it was only wounded there then began the most unbelievable commotion,¹ tail

and feet lashing about in the water with such fury that the canoes had to keep well clear to avoid being overturned. It was as if a windmill had suddenly been dropped into the hitherto unruffled pitch-black surface of the creek. All this turmoil was due not only to the pain of the wound but because the water at once became alive with thousands of little fish called locally by a name that sounded like "pirruwing" (I believe the proper name is piranha), with a hard beaklike mouth resembling the beak of a parrot. These creatures are more dangerous than the alligators. The moment they scent blood in the water, or even an abrasion of the skin, they are upon their victim and tear it to pieces. Dom Pedro said they could turn a living ox into a clean skeleton in an hour or two. There must have been millions of them in the water, for it literally boiled round the wretched alligators. Before many minutes were over, however, the latter sank and the "pirruwings" completed their dinner at the bottom of the creek. It was unpleasant to think what our fate would have been if our canoe had upset.

This, however, more than anything gave the shooting of alligators at Marajo a certain sporting flavour which otherwise it certainly would not have had. Dom Pedro was delighted when we were able to report at the end of our stay that, with the help of the "pirruwings," we had probably disposed of between seventy and eighty of these obnoxious reptiles.

On other days we took our shot-guns and went to a great marsh not far from the house to try and shoot duck, of which the great, heavy, black Muscovy duck (the *pato bravo* or wild duck, *par excellence*, of the Brazilians) was the most conspicuous but the least attractive. This marsh was a perfect paradise of marsh-fowl of all sorts, especially white egrets—whose feathers, alas! were still being exported to adorn the heads of the ladies who attended Queen Victoria's Courts—and ibis of three kinds, the great black and white wood-ibis, the black glossy ibis, and, most wonderful of all, the scarlet ibis. The red colour of these latter was so pronounced that even their

bones were scarlet. When they flew in a mass against the blue sky they looked, not dark like other birds, but like a red cloud lit up by the rays of the setting sun. There were also different kinds of herons, other waders and innumerable flocks of smaller ducks and teal. I have never seen anything like it elsewhere, and it was a joy to see flock upon flock rise and circle round and round overhead. We shot, however, none but those like duck and teal which were edible. Even these it was almost impossible to get ourselves unless they fell on dry land, for the marsh was so treacherous that we did not care to go in to pick up birds which fell there, and our negro guides would not send in their dogs, saying that they would at once be snapped up by the alligators. So, in the end, we did very little shooting, and contented ourselves with studying the birds through our glasses.

One morning we had been walking farther than usual and, being tired and very hot, we lay down for a rest in the middle of a grassy plain on which were dotted about a few low, straggling trees.

We lay flat on our backs talking and gazing up into the sky on the look-out for birds. Presently, out of the blue there appeared a black speck, then another and another. These came circling lower and lower and finally were near enough to be distinguished as vultures of some kind. By degrees they settled on trees near by pompously and without undue haste, like dowagers settling on a sofa before a dinner-party. We paid little attention at first, but after some time we saw that all had their heads turned our way, that in fact we were not watching *them* but they *us*. So they sat unmoving, in the belief that we were dead or dying, and only biding their time to be sure that we were not able to defend ourselves in order to swoop down and pick us to pieces, beginning, of course, with our eyes.

It was an uncanny sensation to be there watching those hideous birds and to feel they were watching us and awaiting the moment of our collapse in order to begin their meal. We imagined them fighting and screaming

over us before we should be actually insensible to what was going on around, and realised for the first time what must be the agony of a traveller in the desert dying of hunger or thirst who saw these monstrous ghouls gathering, watching and waiting for the moment to descend. Then we thought we would act as a bait, for our sporting instincts were aroused.

We lay for some time quite still to see if any would come near, when we prepared to give him a welcome with our guns. But something told them that all was not well, for none descended from his perch. At last, weary of waiting, George and I slowly rose to our feet and walked away. Then, with all the dignity of offended dowagers who had been grossly deceived by being invited to a feast only to see the fatted calf rise and depart under their noses, the vultures rose with heavy wings and gradually, in splendid circles, made for that "privacy of glorious light" from which they had descended expecting a more hospitable reception.

The visit to Marajò is especially connected in my mind with the hosts of birds which I saw there for the first time. I have already mentioned the water-birds, which take the first place. But it was here also that I first saw in any quantities both parrots and parakeets in their wild state. The parrot I had always looked upon as essentially what our "bird-fanciers" call a "cage bird," as if it were created by the Almighty with the special object of passing its life in a cage. I could only think of parrots as climbing, heavy and ungainly, about a small cage and never using their wings. In Marajò, however, it was a real joy to watch them at dawn and sunset flying round with rapidly beating wings and expressing their *joie de vivre*, not indeed harmoniously, like a blackbird or a lark, but at least in quite unmistakable accents. Ever since watching them thus, and the many little green parakeets which used to sit about in our veranda like sparrows when they were tired of playing with each other in the air, I began to grow indignant at the thought of these harmless and friendly little creatures being captured

by hundreds in order that the few which survive may amuse for a few minutes a day kind people at home who believe they are treating them most humanely and, indeed, saving them from an untimely death at the hands of their enemies. Parrots and parakeets, whatever the "Cage Bird" Society may think about it, have no more been created to live behind bars than the robin, the sight of which in a cage, according to Blake, "puts all heaven in a rage."

We left Marajò with real regret and would gladly have spent more time there learning about the birds around us and life on a Brazilian ranch, but we could not afford to lose the chance of going up the Amazon to Manaos, so with Dom Pedro de Miranda we embarked once more in the yacht for Parà which we reached in good time for our ship, carrying with us the most pleasant recollections of our host and his surroundings.

The first twenty-four hours, or perhaps, more after leaving Parà are passed by the ship in threading its way through the "Narrows," a series of waterways sometimes not so much as a hundred yards wide which connect the Parà River with the Amazon proper. This was, perhaps, the most interesting part of the whole journey. How the pilots found their way in a ship of about two thousand tons which had come from England through these intricate passages, especially at night when they were completely unlighted, passed our understanding. However, this was done as a matter of course and without mishap year in, year out, though there were places in which it would have been easy to throw a cricket ball on shore from the deck. The great forest on either side was fascinating, especially as just along the river banks, where the sun could penetrate, there was a lush vegetation of flowering creepers and shrubs.

As soon, however, as we reached the great river itself all this changed, and for about a week we navigated up the middle of the stream, with the banks on either side of us two to three miles away and nothing of any particular interest to watch. An artist wishing to sketch the

Amazon would have little difficulty in conveying an accurate idea of what we saw most of the days of our journey up the river. He need only make a great wash of chocolate-brown to represent the river and beyond it draw a long, low black line for the forest-covered banks. Over all, however, he might, if he could, have painted an ever-changing panorama of glorious cloud effects—generally great mountainous cumuli clouds piled upon each other, which at sunset would take on the most marvellous colours, crimson, purple, indigo and black.

At Manaus we seemed to have been pitched straight into Alice's Wonderland. The town was rubber mad. Everybody was rich and money was being flung about quite recklessly as it always is when too easily got. The great feature of this capital city was an Opera House, recently finished, with a great dome painted in the Brazilian colours, blue, green and yellow. It seemed unlikely that any opera company would ever come so far in order to perform in it. It was, at any rate, closed for the few days we remained there.

We stayed on board ship, as the only hotel in the place was no better than a brothel. The police kept order by robbing anyone who ventured out after dark, with the excellent result that the streets were quite deserted. The chief of police had recently had his gold watch and chain taken from him by one of his subordinates who, much to his disgust and indignation, failed to recognise him in the dark. The streets were mud tracks, but the importance of civilisation and progress was duly emphasised by the theatre and a large iron bridge over a creek which linked up this flourishing city with the virgin forest beyond.

The engineer of the bridge was an English North countryman, who having invited us to dinner one night would not let us return to the ship because, he said, we should surely be attacked by the police. So he just put up hammocks for us in the usual Brazilian way. His bridge was to be formally opened before we left Manaus and he got for us invitations to the ceremony. A small steam train led from the city to the bridge and we, as

foreigners of distinction, were invited to travel in the car reserved for the Governor and his suite. All went off without a hitch till the end of the ceremony, when it was found that the guard of honour, being afraid that they might be left behind and miss their midday meal, invaded the train and filled every vacant seat, leaving the Governor and his suite on the platform. His Excellency was visibly annoyed and his aides-de-camp in resplendent uniforms ran up and down the train expostulating with the soldiers of the guard, even going so far as ordering them to get out, but they only laughed. George and I had somehow, with the help of our engineer, secured places, and the last we saw as the train drew out was the Governor, hot and very angry, on the platform fanning himself furiously with a little paper fan and evidently determined to give his staff an unpleasant half-hour, which was the time he would have to wait before the train returned to fetch him.

We were also invited to a great luncheon-party, given in honour of the Governor, for which a steamer had been expressly hired.

The Governor was exquisitely dressed, he himself, his clothes, his tie, his shoes all forming a really artistic harmony in *café-au-lait*.

The steamer steamed up and down the river, the Rio Negro, in front of the town and the military band in gorgeous uniforms played "selections" from various Italian operas. At first all was very solemn; we might even have been dining in a royal palace. I had next to me an old Irish sea captain who was obviously ill at ease. After one or two set speeches delivered with the grandiloquent oratory suitable for the occasion, the company began to relax and the drinking of toasts all round relieved the tension. The Amazonian habit of drinking toasts was to drink about half the glass and then fling the rest in the air quite regardless of whether the wine fell on one's head and shoulders or those of a neighbour. Soon all of us, dressed as we were in white ducks, were splashed with the strong red Portuguese wine which was being served

liberally and as liberally tossed into the air. Then someone began to bombard those with whom he wished to drink with remnants of bread. Presently my Irish neighbour, finding this much too finicking for his taste, started pelting friends opposite with singularly heavy turtle patties which weighed like lead. His example was imitated and presently there was raging around me a regular battle of turtle patties.

"Now," said the worthy old Irish sea captain, "this is what I call a real cheery hearty party. You wouldn't see this sort of thing in England."

The culminating point of the feast was reached when the Governor said he wished to thank the conductor of the band personally. The latter, a great ebony-coloured gentleman, advanced up the aisle with a large glass of red wine in his hand. I saw the Governor flinch at the sight of it, but he courageously made his little speech of thanks and then the great negro, after drinking His Excellency's health, flung the rest of the contents of the glass into the air so that it stained irremediably the new *café-au-lait* suit of the Governor and, finally opening his arms, he flung them round his victim and kissed him on both cheeks. The Governor threw his eyes up to heaven, evidently asking to be spared, and the public cheered vociferously. The thermometer was about a hundred degrees in the shade.

We returned streaming with wine and perspiration to our ship.

At Manaos I learnt little or nothing about rubber trees or tapping, but I never regretted this strange interlude in my Brazilian journey. George Crawley, with his keen sense of humour, enjoyed every minute of it.

On our return to Pará we found, as already mentioned, an epidemic of yellow fever. Men and women were carried away daily by scores to the hospitals and cemeteries. It was evident that we could do no more good by staying in Pará longer than was necessary, and we decided to take the first Booth steamer going down to the coast to Ceará, a place about two or three hundred miles south,

which, besides being looked on as a health resort, was also the home of another kind of rubber-producing tree, the Manihot, which, though much less productive than the Hevea, was said to grow more quickly and in high land more like that which we should find in the West Indies. There was fortunately a steamer leaving in a day or two, and we hastily said good-bye to our friends and made all arrangements for departure. George, however, who would not be hustled even by yellow fever, left his packing till the morning the boat sailed, and then told me he must go out to say good-bye to one or two more friends whom he had forgotten to call on. Nothing would persuade him to pack first. The boat sailed at twelve midday. He returned to pack at 11.30 a.m. The ship's whistle had already sounded twice and we had about a mile to go in a rowing boat from the quay to the steamer, besides having to get our luggage down to the quay. I had everything ready, porters, rowing boat, etc., in order to leave without delay. After I had waited, raging for what seemed an interminable time, George returned with exaggerated nonchalance. In a very bad temper, I helped to hurl his things pell-mell into his travelling boxes, while he complained of my unreasonable conduct in hurrying him so when we had heaps of time. I retorted that if he wanted to be buried in Para I did not. We came near our one serious quarrel. Just about the time when the third and last whistle ought to have sounded, there came a knock at the door and a black boy appeared with a message from the Booth Company's office. The steamer would not sail till nightfall.

"There you are," said George, "as usual, making me sweat for nothing. I was sure there was heaps of time," and he triumphed over me.

I cannot say whether I was more relieved or disgusted at his extraordinary and unmerited luck. I said, anyhow, I should go on board at once and never wait for him again. Out of bravado he stayed on shore till the last minute. We made it up, however, over our evening game of piquet, which, with chess, formed our regular *passe temps*

after dinner on board ship. The next morning we were breathing the pure sea air again and all was well.

We landed for a day at the delightful little old-world port of Maranhao, with a fine old cathedral standing up over a small river and pleasant sixteenth and seventeenth century streets, a place transplanted, as it were, direct from Portugal. This was the most attractive bit of Brazil that we visited, and my second visit to it confirmed this opinion. Another twelve hours or so brought us to our anchorage off Ceará, a modern town built on a high bluff facing the sea. There was no pretence at a port, and as for many months of the year the great Atlantic rollers came sweeping in on to the flat sandy shore below the bluff, passengers and goods had to be landed on open rafts called *catamarans*, on which platforms were built to take men and goods in comparative dryness to shore. It was most amusing being dumped down off the ship in a cage on to these platformed rafts and being tossed about on them and hearing the waves boiling and swishing beneath us as we were rowed to shore; but the real fun came when, riding on the crest of a great roller, we were deposited for a moment on the sand as the water receded and had to spring to land and make haste to get out of the way before the next wave arrived to swamp us.

We found Ceará an entirely different place from Pará. Built on a dry sandy soil where but little rain fell and open to the great trade winds day and night, there was none of that damp, oppressive heat that became so wearing to nerves and temper at Pará and Manaus. It was really a health resort for those parts. We got two rooms in a good clean little hotel, with the usual hammock hooks in the walls and lack of other furniture. In this we soon made ourselves comfortable. The Booth Company's agent who had been informed beforehand of our arrival, and objects, said that he had made arrangements for us to visit a Brazilian coffee planter, Senhor Figueroa, in the Baturité hills, about forty miles inland, where he had both wild and planted *Manihot* rubber trees. This

suited us perfectly, and we let him know we would arrive at the plantation two days later.

A ramshackle little narrow gauge railway whose trains ran at an average rate of seven miles an hour took us, after crossing the rather dry thorn-covered plains behind Ceará, into the fertile hills of Baturité. The landscape suddenly changed and became like a tropical Devonshire—rolling hills, fast-running streams falling over rocks, rich soil and cultivation everywhere. These hills clearly catch the ocean moisture which passes undischarged over the Ceará plain. Senhor Figueroa's plantations were about three thousand feet above the sea in a most pleasant valley with a mountain stream, which formed a little waterfall close to the house. This fall, with a clear pool below, was the joy of Senhor Figueroa's heart, and every day before breakfast and again before dinner he used to take us out there for a bath. He was a tall, upstanding, hearty, grey-haired old planter full of vigour and good spirits and, like most Brazilians that we met, truly hospitable. He spoke hardly any English, but by this time I had got accustomed to the Brazilian way of speech, which is slower and therefore easier to understand than the language as spoken in Portugal. We all made friends at once. He took us for long rides over the hills to visit his various estates, and we saw not only his Manihot rubber, but also his coffee plantations. He had not yet had very good results from tapping the planted Manihot tree, but the then price was so high (about 13s. 6d. for the pound as against the 3½d. at present) that it paid him fairly well to go on planting at that time. The tree grew like a weed and could be tapped three or four years after the seed was planted. It seemed to have a certain advantage over the Hevea the price of rubber being what it was, but the yield was small and the quality much less good than the latter.

Senhor Figueroa's great subject of conversation was the delights of Liverpool, whither he had once gone in one of the British steamers. He had been so enamoured of Liverpool, its hotels, its theatres, its bars, its races, etc.,

that, I believe, once there it became his earthly paradise ; he never left it even to go to London. He had, of course, been given a good time by the Booth Company captains who lived there, and whom he always entertained in Brazil whenever they could run up to Baturité from Ceará.

After a few days with Senhor Figueroa, we were warned from Ceará to go down in order to catch a Booth steamer which was sailing in a couple of days for Liverpool. George and I had been so happy in the genial Figueroa household (George particularly admired the only picture in our hammock-room which was of a six-foot high bottle, an advertisement of some French cognac nailed against the wall) that we bade our kind host and hostess an almost tearful farewell.

Two days later we were on board the small eight hundred-ton steamer on which we were to cross the Atlantic. She was not built for passengers, but the Booth agent very kindly arranged that we should have the spare cabin. We had no company but the captain and the first mate. The captain was, however, a host in himself. His name was Murray, a descendant of Murray of Broughton, the secretary of Prince Charles Edward. Following the bonny prince had not helped the family fortunes, and all the captain had left was a gold snuff-box with a miniature of the prince, which had once evidently been set in diamonds and an inscription stating that it was given in gratitude by H.R.H. to Murray of Broughton.

After dinner Captain Murray often read us Burns's poems with the true Scots accent, and I have never enjoyed more hearing poetry read aloud. He had the voice and the intuition and the right intonation.

During the day George and I played chess incessantly, at which I was always beaten, and I finished the eight volumes of Gibbons's *Decline and Fall* which I had brought with me for just such an opportunity. The weather was perfect until we got almost within sight of Liverpool, when so violent a storm suddenly broke over us that we had to lie off all night steaming backwards and forwards

within sight of the shore lights. This was the more tantalising to me as, having been bitten above the ankle by some poisonous insect just before leaving Cearà about twenty-six days earlier, my leg was badly infected, swollen with black tumours, and by this time very painful. Though at first I had paid little attention to it, I could not help feeling that it was now a serious matter. George helped me on shore to an hotel, got the best doctor he could hear of, telegraphed to my mother to come at once, and only left me after she had arrived. The doctor took a serious view of it, and said I must lie quite still for a week or ten days.

However, with care and proper treatment the inflammation and swelling disappeared in about a week, and my mother and I were able to leave for Greystoke. Mother-like, I believe she was not only naturally delighted to have me back safe and sound, but quite pleased to have the opportunity of nursing me back to health. The doctor said that if my leg had continued without treatment for another day or two it would have had to come off. If so, it was only one more example of the astonishing and often undeserved good fortune I have, generally speaking, had all through life.

It was now late November, 1895. We decided—my mother and I—to spend Christmas at Greystoke, where we had, as always, a most delightful time, and after the New Year to go as usual to Italy for the sake of her health, which was clearly far from strong.

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CHAPTER X

ROME. CUMBERLAND

(1896)

A PART from the fact that my mother's health required a warmer climate in winter and that she preferred Rome to any other place on the Continent, I had also my own particular reason for wishing to revisit Rome.

For some time past I had felt more and more attracted by my future wife. Though as yet I entertained no definite plans for the future, and though I was sure she had never even thought about me in the light of a possible suitor, yet every time I left Rome I felt restless until I could return there. I was over thirty-two years old in the spring of 1896, and therefore no longer of an age when a man of sense rushes into matrimony without weighing pros and cons. Profoundly though I felt the personal attraction, I could not but admit to myself that even if she would take me, to transplant to a small household in England—which was all I could offer—a girl who had been living *dans le grand monde* in Rome for some years, for her father, Prince Giustiniani-Bandini, kept open house, might be an experiment involving considerable risk for both parties. So I resolved for the time being to try to be better acquainted with her and said nothing about my feelings even to my family.

Courtship—to me a good old fashioned word now fallen into disuse—was in Rome even as late at 1896 no easy matter. There was no opportunity of a *tête-à-tête*, let alone a heart to heart conversation. It was not considered correct even to talk to unmarried girls for more than a quarter of an hour. "Sitting out" at a ball was

taboo. So strict indeed was the supervision in my father-in-law's house that his elder daughters have told me that they were never allowed to cross the "*anti-camera*" or entrance hall of their house in Rome without a maid or a governess, because a footman was always stationed there to open the door for guests. As to meeting and talking out of doors, this was, if possible, more difficult still. We occasionally met at tennis parties, but here also "sitting-out" between sets was quite as much against the law as at a ball, and to talk of the affairs of the heart while patting the ball over the net in the style of the eighteen-nineties seemed to me out of the question.

So through that spring I waited and watched for opportunities of acquaintanceship which never came, frequenting Casa Bandini and any other Roman house or Embassies where I might have a word with "Donna Isabella," also listening eagerly to all that was said about her. In this I was lucky, for she had among the English Catholic families several friends whom I knew well enough to be able to ask about her, and from one and all I heard nothing but admiration and affection. I was especially struck by the way old ladies, too often critical of the younger generation, were unstinting in their praise. The result of all this was, naturally, that I, already so attracted by her, fell ever more in love, but still so far as I could see without hope of having a heart to heart talk. I was beginning to despair, when, soon after Easter, my mother's health, which had been getting slowly worse, began to cause us serious alarm and she said she wished to go back to her house at Ravenstone in Cumberland. I left Rome feeling more unsettled and dejected than ever before in my life. Much depressed about my mother, very unsettled as to my own plans for the future, feeling I could, in the circumstances, make no move towards my heart's desire or even towards taking anyone into my confidence about it.

We travelled home slowly by stages—Florence, Porto Fino, of happy memories, which my mother loved, and

finally Ravenstone, the peace and quiet of which seemed for a few weeks to do good. In June, however, it became evident to the doctors that the end was not far off, and on July 24th it came. All her children were with her, and her strong faith in the mercy and goodness of God enabled her to meet it serenely and without flinching for a moment. Indeed, she was almost glad to go. She used often to say that the world seemed to her so evil a place that she wished to be released from it. Seeing she had had, all things considered, a really happy life, I could not as a young man understand this, and I used to tell her that the world seemed to me not such a bad place to be in. But she would reply that the old feel the burden of evil more than the young and that if I lived I should grow to feel as she did. I confess now that she was right and that after living through the horrors of the Great War and the intolerable weariness of its aftermath, after having had experience of the infinite folly of men who have not yet learnt their lesson but are willing to repeat this fatuous beastliness on the ground that through it human nature is exalted—after going through all this and with a sense of nausea at the futility and selfishness of mankind, I would now readily join her in her daily prayers for a speedy end of the world, but that I believe that it is for us to carry on according to our lights to the end, no matter how bitter it may be.

There are, I suppose, few men of thirty-three to whom their mother meant more than mine to me. We had been constant companions from my earliest days and though we did not see eye to eye in many subjects, such as religion and politics, that never altered our intimate and happy relations. We were both travellers by instinct, and the many driving tours I took with her are amongst my happiest memories. But when she, always active physically and mentally, was threatened with a long, wearisome, and at that time incurable illness, I hardly knew what to wish for—prolongation of life at that price or release, which she herself desired. One summer afternoon she was sleeping on the sofa

in the drawing-room at Ravenstone ; I was reading near her. Looking up I was suddenly struck by the change that had come over her face. The tired expression, the lines of pain to which I was unused—I could not take my eyes from that suffering face. Suddenly she must have felt the thoughts passing through my mind, for her eyes opened and caught mine. Then her face changed and lit up with the beautiful smile I knew so well. We neither of us spoke, but it seemed to me that she understood my conflicting feelings and wished to tell me that I must not be troubled for her sake, for all would be well. I can see that smile quite plainly as I write these words.

When the break which I dreaded really came I felt that it was the end of the life I had lived till that day, but I confess it to my shame, I also realised, with a greater interest in the future, that I should now be free to carry out my plans and live an independent life which I could never have done had she continued to live tied to her bed or sofa at Ravenstone.

My feelings, quite genuine in one direction, were thus moving in another by these reflections, and I understood perhaps for the first time how immensely difficult it is for us to judge others when our own most natural and sincere emotions may be so completely sundered and divided by contradictory sentiments.

After my mother's funeral at Greystoke I felt disturbed and at sea and wanted both to be quiet and yet not to be left alone, above all at Ravenstone. I fortunately found both quiet and companionship at Lyulph's Tower on Ullswater, where my sister-in-law, Mabel, asked me to stay for a few weeks. That spell of rest in surroundings both of people and places that I loved helped me to recover my balance.

Summing up the situation as regarded the future, I determined on two lines of immediate action. Firstly, to return to Rome that winter and decide my fate as far as " Donna Isabella " was concerned.

Secondly, I determined to carry out my plan of planting

rubber in the West Indies, being convinced that fate had clearly pointed out the road I was to take in order to give my wife the sort of surroundings to which she was accustomed and which, not then knowing her genuine simplicity of character, I feared she might expect as of right.

I communicated all this to my sister Elsie, who was my confidante in most of my private affairs, and she at once suggested that we should go to Rome together in the spring of 1897, take an apartment there, and, in addition to my more important affairs, take sketching lessons from my old friend, Onorato Carlandi.

CHAPTER XI

SECOND JOURNEY TO BRAZIL, WEST INDIES AND UNITED STATES WITH SIR ROWLAND BIFFEN

(1897)

IN the meantime I set about making preparations for putting my rubber plans into execution without delay.

I became acquainted with Sir Thisselton Dyer, the Curator of Kew, who was greatly interested in the future of rubber planting in British colonies, and put me in touch with a young botanist of Cambridge, Rowland Biffen.¹ He had already distinguished himself in botanical research and was trying to discover better methods of tapping and curing rubber than the primitive ones still in vogue.

While myself getting together a small circle of friends to form an experimental syndicate for rubber planting and curing in the West Indies, I also arranged with Biffen to carry out his experiments during the spring and then to accompany me in August, 1897, on a great journey—what the Germans would call a *Studienreise*—to the Amazons, Central America, Mexico and the West Indies.

Among other things connected with rubber Biffen had discovered that the latex of the *Castilloa Elastica*, the Mexican tree, could be treated by a separating machine like cream, and the particles of rubber completely freed from the black liquid in which they were suspended, so as to produce a thick white cream-cheesy sort of substance which, when spread out on a porous surface to absorb the remaining moisture, produced a rubber of

¹ Now Sir Rowland Biffen, head of the Agricultural Research Station at Cambridge.

a greater chemical purity than anything on the market, and, what was still better, stronger, more elastic and much less inclined to putrify.

I showed samples of this to Christian Gray and to Sir Thisselton Dyer of Kew, and both concurred in thinking that the discovery might be of immense value in the rubber industry.

Biffen and I started for Para in July, 1897, convinced that we were on the path to success.

This time, having warned Mr. Purcell beforehand that I wanted to visit a serious rubber tapping centre where we could spend some time with the *seringueiros* and get much more detailed and reliable data than before, I was told on arrival at Para that arrangements had been made for us to visit an estate a considerable way up one of the Para River tributaries, where there was an empty and deserted planter's house which we could occupy and near which a number of *seringueiros* camped during the rubber tapping season. Here we should be able to get all the information we required. There was, however, no steamer going up this stream, and it would be necessary to hire a steam launch, which would deposit us at the place and return for us in about ten days' time. We had to collect in Para the various stores we needed and were told we must do everything for ourselves, cooking, cleaning up, etc., as the *seringueiros* were far too much occupied to help our temporary household.

To all this I, who had cooked and washed and looked after donkeys in Rhodesia, most readily agreed, and having made our necessary purchases of supplies for a fortnight we set out in a rather rickety steam launch on a river journey which lasted about two days and nights.

We arrived at our destination towards midday. There was a decaying pier at which the launch tied up. The crew helped us to off load our stores and carry them to the house, which was, unlike Boa Vista, two or three hundred yards from the river and surrounded by great forest trees. Here indeed we were in the midst of primeval woods. Along the river banks, as usual, there

was a thick growth of shrubs and flowering creepers, but under the eternal shade of the forest nothing grew and the great stems rose grandly like the pillars of a cathedral while flowers of orchids and other parasites flourished only on the branches a hundred and fifty feet above us where they could enjoy the sun and air they needed. Above us also chattered monkeys and parrots and countless tropical birds. On the ground floor of this forest place all was silence and shade.

There had been a small clearing round the house which now, however, was all covered over with shrubs and secondary growth, making a jungle through which it would have been necessary to hack our way had there not been a small used path up to the main entrance.

The house, perhaps fifty years before, had been a fine stone building roofed with tiles. Now, however, the internal woodwork was half rotten, the roof was falling in, the staircase up to a great room on the first floor, which we chose for our bedroom, was in a ruinous condition. The only sign of life in the whole place was a vase with flowers and a small oil lamp placed in a niche half-way up the staircase before a little statuette of the Blessed Virgin and Child. This somewhat comforted me, for a more grim, abandoned and sinister looking abode I never saw. However, when our men had deposited our goods on the rotting planks of the floor and left us, Biffen and I soon got out the necessary stores, hung up our hammocks and prepared generally to pass the next ten days in our forest grange, which Mariana might have envied, even though it had no moat around it.

We decided to turn in early that night, for we had no lights but candles in the usual glass globes to protect them from the wind, which as there were no windows blew and whistled freely all round the room. We found it was well we did so, for no sooner had the sun set than the house became alive with great bats, which we believed, rightly or wrongly, to be vampires of which we had heard many stories in that part of the world. We had been particularly warned to cover our feet when we lay down

in our hammocks, for the habit of the vampire is to suck blood from the toes, fanning with its wings the feet of the victim the while so that he feels nothing and only wakes up terribly exhausted by loss of blood.

When, therefore, after sunset these hideous creatures began swishing past our faces in the semi-darkness, lighted only by our two candles, we hastily crept into our hammocks under the mosquito nets and were careful that our toes should not protrude. Whether the bats were actually vampires or not we never knew, but they never attacked us, and beyond keeping us awake the first two or three nights by their squealing and the swishing of their wings, they caused us no inconvenience.

One other unpleasant incident connected with that place remains in my mind. I was leaning on the window sill gazing out of the window and smoking a pipe just before sunset, when I felt something creep over my bare forearm and looking down I saw a very large, hairy spider, which appeared to be what old Anderson in South Africa would have called a tarantelo.

It reminded me of him and made me smile, but fortunately I never stirred. Slowly, after having examined my arm and found it uninteresting, it climbed off and disappeared out of the window. I cannot complain of its behaviour any more than that of the bats, but neither of them were pleasant co-lodgers.

Our routine at this place was to rise before dawn and have some coffee, prepared the night before, and bread and butter. We would then visit the *seringueiros'* camp about half a mile away, in a clearing in the forest, and go round with one of them on his beat to see him tap the rubber trees with a little axe-shaped instrument, the head of which was not more than a couple of inches in breadth. Under the wound in the bark he fixed a small tin cup, into which the latex slowly trickled. All round a large tree as many as fourteen of these cups would be fixed, the first day about two feet from the ground, the next a foot higher, and so on for as high as the tapper could reach. Tapping was only good for the cool hours

of the morning. By nine or so the tappers started going the rounds to collect the latex. This was done by removing the cups, pouring the latex they contained into a large calabash and then standing the empty cups at the foot of each tree. The calabashes full of latex were brought to camp about midday, when the tappers had their principal meal. After this began the curing of the rubber collected in the morning, which had been poured into a large pail or bowl. Great fires of the nuts of the Urucuri palm were then lighted, and wooden instruments shaped like the paddles of a canoe, over the blade of which the latex was poured in very small quantities at a time, were held and constantly twisted in the smoke of these nuts, which possessed some preservative quality. Thus the rubber was formed in layers of skin not thicker than gold beater skin plaster, until a solid mass weighing many pounds was produced. This, the cured rubber, was then sliced open at the junction of the paddle head and handle and was ready for shipment. It was a laborious process and certainly bad for the eyes, because of the acrid smelling smoke of the nuts, which the shifting winds constantly blew into the faces of the *seringueiros*. I have no idea how the Hevea latex is treated in the great rubber plantations of Ceylon and Malaya, but no doubt some easier and quicker process must have been discovered.

Meanwhile Biffen and I, intent on our separating treatment, tried the Hevea latex in an experimental separating machine built specially for us by Messrs. Lister & Co., of Dursley, Gloucestershire. To our great disappointment it refused to yield to this treatment, probably because we could not produce the necessary number of revolutions per minute with our machine. This was one of the principal reasons which decided me against planting the Hevea tree, which was so successful as a plantation tree in the East Indies. The other reason that was decisive in our eyes was that *seringueiros* all confirmed what George Crawley and I had been told two years before, namely, that it was useless trying to tap a Hevea tree unless it was flooded yearly up to three

or four feet from the ground. In fact, any tree not growing on flood land they left severely alone.

This was a bad beginning for our "*Studienreise*," and we left somewhat downcast after ten days of watching the *seringueiros* at work and taking copious notes. As to the men themselves, they were mostly pure-bred Indians. Quiet, courteous and kindly, they welcomed us when we arrived and gave us all the help they could. They all spoke some Portuguese, which made matters easy for us.

They worked, as I understood, for a syndicate or master who hired a stretch of forest from the owner, paid the workmen a fixed wage and sold the rubber in the Parà market. I suppose that this was the usual method of business at that time, at any rate along the lower reaches of the Amazon. In the higher reaches the rubber companies no doubt hired the forests from the Government in large blocks, and as we know from reports on the subject, made use of what was practically forced labour. There was, however, nothing of that kind, I believe, in the Province of Parà.

On our return to the city of Parà we decided that we ought to inspect the Baturité plantations of Manihot rubber in the Province of Ceará, and I cabled to my good friend Senhor Figueroa asking if we might visit him. He said he would be delighted, and we embarked on the first Brazilian Lloyd steamer going down the coast, after saying good-bye to our many friends in Parà—the Purcells, G. Brocklehurst and Åstlet, Pedro de Miranda and others.

The journey down the coast to Ceará was uneventful. I enjoyed visiting Maranhao again. Biffen and I were much diverted by a general who always dressed in a gorgeous uniform and was surrounded by an equally gorgeous staff. He evidently suffered much from seasickness, and used to spend most of the day on deck with his head in the lap of a lady of colour, who, we were told, did not enjoy the best reputation even at Manaos.

The Scottish engineer of the ship told me a story

which deserves to be recorded, though I cannot vouch for its truth.

When the Emperor Dom Pedro was deposed he was allowed to leave for Europe in the best Brazilian Lloyd steamer of the newest model, which was a fast vessel for that date. The Republican Government, wishing to honour him, since he was universally respected, sent two cruisers of the Brazilian Navy to escort him to Europe. These, unfortunately, were unable to keep up with the Emperor's steamer, which had to halt from time to time in order to allow them to catch her up. The Emperor, after a day or two, tired of these constant delays, sent for the captains and told them that he much appreciated the honour the Government had done him in providing him with an escort, but that he hoped they would not inconvenience themselves any more on his account. He added that if the Government feared he might return to Brazil he could assure them that he would never do so unless recalled by the express wish of the people.

The captains regretted politely that they were compelled to accompany his ship to Europe. Their cruisers, however, travelled so slowly that the Lloyd captain at last amused himself by making circles round them. After two more days of this the captains of the armed cruisers let him know that, if the Lloyd ship slipped away under cover of darkness, they would make no objections. The Lloyd captain prepared to get up full steam at sunset, when the two cruisers signalled to him to stop and the captains came on board to ask him, before he left them, to tell them exactly where they were and which was the nearest Brazilian port.

Biffen and I landed safely at Ceará, where we were met by our kind host Figueroa, who took us straight up to his delightful place in the Baturité hills, where we spent a very happy ten days. As far, however, as our rubber investigations were concerned, they were as unsatisfactory as those of Pará. The Manihot trees' latex also would not separate, and the tree itself, though growing very rapidly for three or four years and growing, besides,

on hilly land such as might have suited the West Indies, produced so little rubber in comparison with *Hevea* or *Castilloa Elastica* that we definitely ruled it out.

So, bidding farewell to the pleasant Baturité country, we headed first for the West Indies and afterwards for Mexico, where the *Castilloa* grows in a wild state in large quantities.

This necessitated returning to Parà, where we took the first boat available for Barbadoes. We only stayed a few days in Barbadoes, which as my first introduction to the West Indies was rather disappointing. The climate is good and the sea delicious for bathing, but the romantic atmosphere of the Spanish Maine is somehow lacking. The Barbadians are, however, very proud of themselves, of their island and of the British Empire. Who that has read *Mr. Midshipman Easy* does not remember the account of the Quality Ball during the Napoleonic Wars, where one of the coloured gentlemen announced with pride, "Long as Barbadoes stands stiff, King George he hab no fear." That is somewhat the superior attitude of Barbadoes towards the other islands even to-day, and it is slightly resented.

Barbadoes is essentially a sugar island still, and such it will presumably remain. From the point of view of scenery sugar plantations in a low rolling country cannot, of course, compare with the high virgin forests of Trinidad, now, alas, rapidly disappearing, the wooded mountains and streams of Dominica, which is one of the beauty spots of the world, or the varied scenery of Jamaica.

So from Barbadoes we went south to Port of Spain, Trinidad, where I was most hospitably received by the Governor, Sir Hubert Jerningham, who, like myself, was an ex-diplomat, and by Mr. Hart, the Curator of the Botanical Gardens, to whom I had an introduction from Sir Thisselton Dyer of Kew.

There is a beautiful entrance known as the "Bocas" to Port of Spain Harbour, through green but rocky islands which stretch from the most westerly point of Trinidad

to Venezuela, whose mountains can be seen across the bay. I had these parts already well in my mind's eye from having read books on the West Indies, particularly Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* and his excellent little book of travel, *The Bow of Ulysses*.

I was as enthusiastic about them as the oldest West Indian. In fact, I felt as if I belonged to them and they to me. Not only their astonishing beauty but also the peculiar romance of their history—what island has not got stories to tell that would fill a hundred novels—and their former splendour and wealth, now long since departed as regards most of them, with perhaps the one exception of Trinidad, which has struck oil—all these things combined to give the West Indies a special halo of attraction and interest which is difficult to rival for an Englishman in any other part of the world.

Biffen and I settled down to work in the Botanical Gardens of Port of Spain, paying special attention to the *Castilloa* which grew and flourished there. Mr. Hart allowed us to tap the trees and experiment with the latex, as both he and the Governor were much taken with the idea of planting rubber in Trinidad. We also visited cocoa plantations in the neighbourhood, and concluded that cocoa and rubber could well be planted together.

Port of Spain is not a very attractive city. It is very hot being sheltered from the sea breezes by a maze of wooded hills rising to about 3,000 feet to the north, and I noticed there the unpleasant turkey buzzard and even the flying cockroaches, which made me take a dislike to Parà. But Biffen and I were enthusiastic, working and taking notes all day. Mr. Hart was much interested in our machine for separating rubber latex, and agreed with us that it would be of the greatest value. We sent home samples of separated *Castilloa* rubber taken from trees growing in Trinidad, and were assured it was better and purer than any rubber on the market. Everything pointed to *Castilloa* as being the most suitable tree for the West Indies, and Mr. Hart quite supported this view.

After a fortnight's work in Trinidad, as I had heard

that there were large plantations of Castilleja in Mexico, I thought we ought to visit them before returning home.

We had to go round by Colon (the Atlantic port of the Panama Canal) and Jamaica, but we had made so many detours already in order to reach places in these latitudes which we were bound for that a few hundred miles more or less by sea seemed like a small matter. We wanted to land at Colon and see the remains of the French works on the Canal, but unfortunately there was, as usual, an outbreak of yellow fever, and no passengers could land. For forty-eight hours we lay off Colon in enforced idleness, and reached Jamaica about ten or twelve days after leaving Port of Spain.

We had three days in Jamaica and drove about the island, but could not in three days without motors visit the beautiful northern shore. I went to look for the grave of my Long ancestor in the old Spanish cathedral at Spanish Town, but failed to find it on that journey. Otherwise, beyond the usual sights near Kingston, we did nothing. I was not very favourably impressed with the country round Kingston, which was flat and very dusty, and I left without any wish to settle in Jamaica.

From Jamaica we went to Vera Cruz, the oldest Spanish city in Mexico. It was then a foul-smelling place, infested with cockroaches, turkey buzzards and yellow fever. As soon as possible we left for Mexico City, where I hoped to get letters for the managers of some of the big rubber plantations on the Pacific Coast, about which the financial papers in London had been writing a good deal. Leaving Vera Cruz as soon as we had cleared our goods through the Customs, we took the Orizaba route up to Mexico City, and, having heard much of the beauties of Orizaba, we resolved to spend at least one night there. The railway from the coast to Mexico via Orizaba is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. After leaving the dry, flat lowland of the coast the track passes up through the most gloriously forested mountains with running streams everywhere, and a tropical vegetation surmounted

from time to time by glimpses of the great snow-capped peak of Orizaba.

On reaching Orizaba, which was high up and comparatively cool, Biffen and I, already enamoured of Mexico, decided to stay two nights and explore a little among the tropical forests around. We were sorry we could not spare more time, for both the little old Spanish town and the surrounding country fascinated us. But loitering was not possible, so two days later we left for Mexico City, which stands on a high plateau, surrounded by mountains, including the snow-capped volcanoes of Popocatepetl and Iztaczihuatl, almost devoid of vegetation except for thousands of acres of aloe plantations from which *pulque*, the intoxicating drink beloved of Mexicans, is made.

I went at once to see our Minister, Francis Stronge, whom I had met before in the Diplomatic Service, and he kindly gave me introductions to people whom he thought might help us in our quest. Particularly he advised us to consult Mr. Lionel Carden, our Consul, who knew Mexico well.

Mr. Carden told us that as Mr. X, M.P., director of one of the large rubber producing companies on the Pacific coast, had just arrived from England, he would doubtless be able to let us see all we wished. The plantation had been started on a large scale, the land concession amounted to several hundred thousand acres and contained wild as well as planted *Castilloa* trees in large numbers. This seemed perfect, and enthusiastically I called on Mr. X. without delay, bearing an introduction from Carden. X., I thought, received me somewhat frigidly, and even suspiciously. He promised to arrange for our journey down to the plantations as soon as he could. The days passed, however, and nothing happened. Biffen and I joined the club in a beautiful old Spanish palace with a patio decorated with coloured tiles; we hired horses and rode out over the plain to the distant hills; we heard all the gossip about the Diaz administration, then in the plenitude of its power, and we passed the time pleasantly enough. But we were in a hurry to

get on and Mr. X. would not, for some reason or other, produce the necessary permits. So I went to Mr. Carden and asked his advice. He agreed with me in thinking there was something fishy about this rubber plantation, and advised me to go down to the Tehuantepec Isthmus, where there were communities of American planters who were, he knew, growing *Castilloa* rubber as well as coffee. He procured me introductions to these.

Biffen and I then left at once for Vera Cruz again, taking the line via Jalapa instead of that by Orizaba. We had a couple of days free before our steamer sailed from Vera Cruz to Coatzacoalcas, the Atlantic port of the Isthmus, and we spent these at Jalapa, a most enchanting place sufficiently high up to be cool at night, but low enough to have the tropical vegetation, flora and fauna, which interested us both.

At Vera Cruz we embarked on a small Mexican coasting steamer, which was not a model of comfort and brought us, after a voyage of about eighteen hours, across the stormy gulf of Mexico to Coatzacoalcas.

Here I got my first real taste of life in a small out-of-the-way country town, almost a village, of Spanish Central America—to which the Isthmus belongs rather than to what may be called the mainland of Mexico.

Broad grass streets like lawns with cart-tracks up and down them, avenues of mangoes and of the flamboyant tree, somewhat like an acacia with a gorgeous flame-coloured flower, small one-storied houses of adobe construction painted in bright colours with gardens full of brilliant flowers and shrubs. One or two stone-built Government buildings, a jail, and a wooden church, a few general stores and a pervading sense of great peace, rest and remoteness: there you have Coatzacoalcas in the 1890's. The inhabitants were mostly Indians and half-caste Indians, with a few negroes and mulattoes, a very few whites, who loitered about as if born tired, all dressed in white duck and wearing the high-crowned, wide-brimmed Mexican hats, which were in those days such a feature of Mexican life. The whites had mostly revolvers

buckled to their belts, and the Indians their inseparable machetes or cutlasses, without which no one could move in the bush. They looked formidable weapons, but I never heard of their owners using them against each other. However, as we had heard stories of the dangers of travel in remote regions of Mexico, I decided that Biffen and I must buy pistols or revolvers for our belts, if only for the look of the thing. Biffen protested vigorously, but finally submitted. Nevertheless, about three days later, as we were riding through the high forest under the guidance of an Indian, Biffen suddenly exclaimed that he would wear his pistol no more because it was rubbing him sore. He took it off and flung it into the bush, telling me that he would cultivate a fierce expression instead. This was so impossible that I could not but laugh.

I still have my pistol with a bone handle and a Mexican eagle on it. It looked then as if it was a hundred years old and would certainly never have frightened a rabbit. Biffen's fierce expression would probably have been more useful in an emergency.

That night after supper at the Locanda we sat out in the square in the moonlight smoking cigars we had rolled ourselves from fresh green tobacco leaves, and listened to the prisoners in the jail which bounded the square singing delightful old Spanish folk-songs to the accompaniment of their own guitars.

What could be more enchantingly Arcadian? It was infinitely superior to Voltaire's South American El Dorado as described in *Candide*. I at once fell head over ears in love with the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and had no reason to fall out of love with it at any later time.

Some hours' journey over the rickety small gauge Tehuantepec railway brought us to a station where we found a rest-house to spend the night, and from there we hired mules and a guide to ride to the plantation started on "collectivist" lines by an energetic and amusing American doctor. He entertained us royally for two or three days while we examined the coffee fields and rubber trees and tried to get some sort of an idea of the relative

yields of wild and planted *Castilloa*, about which we were still very hazy. The planted trees here were too young to give any definite data, but, as far as it was possible to judge, the yield seemed about the same.

Biffen and I enjoyed our visit at this camp of planters greatly. The doctor was, I think, the financier of the party and travelled back and forth between the plantation and Boston collecting funds in the latter place and looking after the physical welfare of his flock in the former. The plantation itself was managed by a capable American who had had experience of coffee planting in other parts of Mexico. The planters inhabited carefully planned houses with the latest comforts for tropical regions and excellent water brought from a distance to all of which the doctor had attended. They were a cheery, pleasant and friendly crowd.

This was the first experience I had of meeting a large number of Americans who had never been to Europe. I found it very pleasant. I have genuinely got the same enjoyment since one of my meetings with Americans who are not spoiled by the "great game of politics" which, it must be admitted, is often, particularly in U.S.A., since the introduction of the principle of the "spoils to the victors," a great school for scandal.

I began there to acquire a special taste for quite ordinary American ways of speech, which amused me as much, no doubt, as my quaint English amused them. When the good doctor, in reply to a query from me as to whether there were good fish in the river, answered quite naturally, "Oh my, elegant!" my cup of joy for the moment overflowed. That use of the word "elegant" always had a peculiar charm for me as when, for instance, a lady at a party, looking at some shirt studs made with minute diamonds and rubies to look like ladybirds, suddenly ejaculated:

"My, Mr. Ambassador, what elegant lady bugs you have there!"

But all this is beside the mark. The real point is that while my own compatriot, the M.P. in Mexico City treated

me with suspicion and let me see nothing of his plantation, which I, of course, naturally suspected in return of being a fiction, these kindly, friendly Americans not only entertained Biffen and me gratis, but showed us everything.

One thing, however, in our evening conversations surprised and alarmed me. This was that, though they evidently felt no sort of ill-will, but rather the reverse, towards the individual Englishman like myself who crossed their path, they one and all were filled with a sort of ancestral suspicion and aversion for a fictitious bugbear called England—in fact, what Owen Wister has called the “Ancient Grudge” was still very much alive and active.

So far as I know it still exists and trots out on occasions, but in a much milder form. It has indeed become a rather rusty and disreputable weapon in the hands of politicians.

We said good-bye with regret to our American hosts, who accompanied us a long way down the river in their launch. I have vivid recollections of frequently running aground on sandbanks. Whenever this happened one of us would have to jump overboard with the end of a rope which was attached to the donkey-engine and, swimming and wading, get ashore. Then the rope had to be firmly tied to a tree, the donkey-engine was set going, the rope was wound up, and the launch gradually dragged off the bank.

So back to Coatzacoalcas, Vera Cruz and Mexico City. Mr. X had left for London without leaving behind him the desired permits, and as poor Biffen had on the last trip developed a severe attack of dysentery we thought we had better leave without delay for colder regions.

I thus entered the United States for the first time from Texas. Everything was newer to me even than Mexico, where, unusual as it was, there still remained some distinct flavour of Europe.

They say that when a French *chef* wishes to give a dish a delicate flavour of garlic, he chews the herb and then

breathes over the dish. In Mexico I still felt, perhaps because I knew Latin Europe very well, that a European cook had imparted a flavour to the Mexican dish.

Immediately on my entry into the U.S.A. however I realised that I was actually in a New World to which I should have to adjust myself if I wanted to get along.

The life in the Pullman cars and the conversations in their smoking-compartments, where one learns more about current events than in the drawing-rooms of the "four hundred," or even perhaps than at the tables of captains of industry; the very primitive restaurants at the stations in Texas, where the owner shook hands as one came in, saying: "Delighted to see you," and again when you left, saying: "Come again"; the complete lack of any reserve among new acquaintances, who discussed their own affairs apparently without any sense of diffidence; the general absence of any wish for the privacy which is one of the most conspicuous characteristics of England; the delightful friendliness towards strangers, instead of that attitude of suspicion also a characteristic of England; finally, the diversities of speech already noted—all these things interested, delighted and entertained me and have continued to do so ever since.

We started at once by train for New York via Niagara, which we both wanted to see.

It was well on in October but still very warm when we arrived at Niagara, where we stayed on the Canadian side in full view of the falls which, with the wonderful autumn colours, delighted us.

From Niagara to New York was a short day's journey through beautiful mountains covered with firs and scarlet maples. New York itself I found even then overwhelming.

Having put my good friend and travelling companion, who was by now quite recovered, on to a ship for England, I returned to Mexico City determined, if I could, to fathom the mystery of that plantation on the Pacific coast. This was not to be, however. On one pretext or another I was always put off by the company's office in Mexico City.

Finally Carden suggested I should pay another visit to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to see another American plantation he had heard of and also to visit some lands he had bought together with an old English colonel who was to meet me at Coatzacoalcos. So I started again for Vera Cruz, where I was, during the night, taken so ill in the terrible Locanda that I was sure I had yellow fever.

I was just able to crawl on board the little coasting steamer again. A tremendous "Norther," the wind most feared in the gulf, was blowing, and all night long I spent lashed to the deck-house, drenched to the skin by the waves breaking over the ship. This acted as a cure and I arrived at Coatzacoalcos with a tremendous appetite and never feeling better in my life.

This was fortunate, as no sooner had I arrived than the old Colonel, who had a river sailing-boat waiting, bundled me into it and started off up a tributary of the Coatzacoalcos River for the land which he and Carden had bought.

The Norther was still blowing and the Colonel, soon after nightfall, got tired of steering and put the tiller into my hand. How we ever reached our destination I have no idea.

I only remember holding tight on to that tiller in a howling gale, peering into the darkness, partially lit by the brilliant stars of those latitudes, and trying to avoid great snags of wood that came floating downstream. A few days at this place was enough to convince me that it was not suited for the sort of plantation I wanted to start, besides which I much preferred the West Indies, with an English Government, to Mexico where, though President Diaz had established law and order by Nazi methods for some years, all indications seemed to point to a recrudescence of trouble when he died, and he was already an old man.

I visited another American plantation where I was again so hospitably entertained that I tried to repay my hosts by playing poker with them. Unfortunately, for three or four hours I could not help winning, and I felt

I was becoming very unpopular. Before dawn, however, the luck changed and in an hour I had lost all my winnings and as much more as I thought enough. So we broke up more happily and my hosts were satisfied. That was, I think, the only night I ever spent gambling almost to daybreak. I learnt nothing at the plantation I didn't know before, except to appreciate still more the qualities of those American pioneers.

Returning to Mexico City I found still no news of Mr. X., M.P., and I left for New York and England.

I have never been back to Mexico, but I can say unhesitatingly that it is one of the most beautiful, varied and attractive countries I have ever visited. I do not, however, advise anyone to go to Vera Cruz, like Blackpool, "for health and pleasure."

CHAPTER XII

LONDON AND FORMATION OF RUBBER SYNDICATE. ROME

(1898)

I RETURNED to England early in 1898 and at once set about the formation of a Syndicate for the plantation of rubber in the West Indies. I was fortunate in finding support in influential quarters as the result of the report that, with Biffen's help, I had drawn up on the prospects of planting *Castilloa* rubber in Trinidad. Our Chairman was Lord Stanmore, formerly Sir Arthur Gordon, and an ex-Governor of Trinidad; Mr. Charles Booth was on the Board as also was Sir Edward Jenkinson, the well-known Chief of British Secret Service, and Chairman, later, of the Daimler Company; my great friend and kinsman, Charlie Morpeth, afterwards Lord Carlisle, and one or two others besides myself. We had subscribed among friends about £5,000, to be called up as and when required, which was considered amply sufficient to carry us along while in the experimental stage, for we were all agreed that this was an experiment, and as such we should not attempt anything on a large scale at first. The next step was to find a reliable Englishman to act as manager on the spot. Mr. Thorlief L. M. Orde, an Oxford friend of Charlie Morpeth, was strongly recommended and approved. He had spent some years in South Africa and was thoroughly accustomed to roughing it and to managing coloured people, besides being in character and physique one of the finest and best of men.

Coming from an old Northumberland family, his mother was a Dane from whom he got his Scandinavian name of Thorleif, and he looked a typical Viking when I

first knew him. Well over six feet in height, broad-shouldered and erect, with fair, ruddy hair and bluest of blue eyes that could smile and flash with anger almost at the same time, I have rarely met a more attractive personality or a truer friend.

Even after I could no longer visit the plantations as often as I should have liked, we kept up a regular correspondence until, to my great sorrow, he died in the early spring of 1934, after years of courageous struggle against adverse circumstances. It has been one of the greatest regrets of my life that I was partially responsible for the wasting of so fine a man on what turned out to be a mere will-o'-the-wisp.

All arrangements for the organisation of the Syndicate being complete, I was now free to give my thoughts wholly to the more absorbing affair of my marriage.

The winter before, in Rome, had not advanced matters greatly—I was still too uncertain as to Isabella's feelings for me to dare "to put it to the touch, to win or lose it all." But now I felt I could not put it off any longer and that this spring must decide.

Accordingly, early in the spring of 1898, I started for Rome with my mind made up. On arrival, I thought I detected a warmth of greeting that I had not noticed before. But still the old difficulties of approach existed.

After some weeks, however, I did what I supposed a young Roman in similar circumstances would have done, and wrote to Princess Bandini, saying in Grandisonian style, that I wished to marry her daughter, Isabella, and asking if I might speak directly to her whom Sir Charles Grandison would have described as "the object of his affections." I regret I did not keep a copy of that letter which would no doubt later have given Isa and me, and particularly my sons, much food for merriment.

I received a most friendly reply saying that I might say what I had to say to Isa herself and was given a day and an hour.

This was so unexpectedly favourable that I walked on air at the appointed time to the Palazzo Bandini in the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, which is now the official centre of the Fascist Party. I wonder what all those reception-rooms, which I used to know so well, look like now?

Strange to say everything went as usual. The porter in the courtyard, with the Roman statues round it (they are still there) did not seem to think that anything earth-shaking was about to happen. The footman in the *anticamera*, who admitted me, looked as unconcerned and aloof as if nothing special was taking place, and another, also as uninterested in the great events passing around him as a goldfish in a bowl, showed me into the "*salottino rosso*," where in a state of mind that need not be described, I collapsed into a carved gilt chair in red brocade, presumably of Italian Louis XV style, but of this I cannot be sure. Considering the circumstances this lack of observation was, perhaps, not entirely unnatural.

Presently in came Isa and, for the first time, and from the smile with which I was greeted, I realised that all was well. From the extreme of uncertainty I now rushed to the other extreme of absolute sureness. I told her that I had been in love with her for three years and asked point-blank if she would marry me. She replied with that outspoken simplicity and straightforwardness which is, unexpectedly yet frequently, characteristic of Italians, that I had never spoken to her of my affection before, but only of travels, of social questions, or of indifferent matters, so how could she guess what my feelings were? I excused myself as best I could for my long silence, but as the ice was now broken, I begged to know whether I stood any chance of success.

Then she answered that indeed she would marry me, but first she must know what I thought about religion. Her religion, she said, and I was sure that what she said was true, was the most important thing in the world to her, and she could never marry a man who did not share

it with her. To do so would create a division which would but increase with years. I replied that while I had a great respect for those who felt strongly as I knew she did on this subject, I myself had no convictions. I was, in fact, without any definite faith except an innate belief in a God Who was just and merciful, and I was ready to leave my future in His hands provided I did what seemed right, honest and kind according to my lights. In fact, I more or less quoted R. L. Stevenson's well-known Christmas sermon. Beyond this I promised never to interfere with the exercise of her religion, or with the religious education of any children. She should have her own way altogether in those matters. But she was not to be satisfied. Religion must be, she argued, the foundation of the unity of the family. If the family were founded on a broken stone, how could it last?

"If you have no strong convictions of your own," she asked, "why not at least examine mine and see what they consist of? Do you know anything about Catholic beliefs?" I admitted I really did not, but said I did not think it possible for me to become a member of any Church or Body insisting on such definite articles of faith as I understood was the case of the Catholic Church.

"If you know nothing about it," she continued, "why not, before deciding, learn a little?"

She could not change her conviction that marriage with one, however much she loved him, who was not of her Faith could not be happy either for her or for the other. If, however, it were possible for me honestly to accept her Faith, then indeed she would be my wife. When I still hesitated, she insisted, "Cannot you at least for my sake look into this?"

"Yes," I said, I would look into it. Still I could hold out no hope of a change in my views. But who would tell me about the Faith? I knew no one.

She then suggested Monsignor Merry del Val whom I knew slightly as a young Anglo-Spanish priest, who had been educated in England, and was a special favourite

of Pope Leo XIII. He had already sent him on an important mission to Canada where he had acquitted himself of a difficult task to the satisfaction of all concerned. There was no one with whom I would rather have spoken on such a subject and I readily agreed. I said I would at once ask him to let me see him, and we parted in sad uncertainty as to the future. I don't know and have never asked what her feelings were. I know that I felt as if "The Heavens above were falling," as if "The Earth's foundations fled." The footman in the *anticamera* and the porter in the courtyard with the statues seemed as uninterested as before.

In two or three days I called as arranged on Monsignor Raphael Merry del Val. He lived in two rooms on the top floor of the Vatican Palace, commanding a most magnificent view over the city of Rome and the campagna beyond to the Alban hills on the south and the Sabine mountains on the east and north-east.

Whenever he could spare an hour from his duties as one of the private secretaries of Pope Leo XIII he would give it up to me. I often, however, had to sit and wait for him in this aerie under the roof of the Vatican and had time for meditation while lifting my eyes unto the hills.

After this lapse of time it is very difficult for me to remember the precise tenor and sequence of our conversations, which extended over many interviews during some four weeks and, in any case, this would not be the place to attempt to transcribe them at length.

Very shortly, however, I think I may describe them somewhat as follows :

He began by asking in what religion I had been brought up. I said, "In the English Church." He asked me if I was still a member. I told him that since I left school I had ceased to attend its services except to accompany my mother. He asked if I belonged to any other communion ; I said I did not. In reply to his question why I had left the Church of England I said that having found, even as a small boy, that its teaching and practice

were not in agreement with that of other Protestant communities, I ultimately came to the conclusion that none of them taught the religious truth they claimed to teach. As one sample of these differences I said that it had particularly struck me as a small boy that whereas I was told that, to have a crucifix in church or in one's room, was almost tantamount to idolatry, I found both crucifixes and candles on the communion tables of Lutheran churches in Germany, which my mother always attended, without these giving her any sort of scandal there. When I asked if this was right, my mother said that it was the practice of the Lutheran Church, and that Lutherans were good Protestants, but I could never understand why a practice which was apparently good and praiseworthy in Germany should be idolatrous and abominable in England. That was the beginning.

Then I began to find out that Presbyterians whose churches my mother always attended when in Scotland were, in many points that seemed of great importance, quite at variance with Anglicans to the south of the Border, while the Sovereign of Great Britain was the recognised head of both Churches. Was there ever anything more illogical? In the same way in Switzerland, Protestants were divided between Lutherans, Calvinists and Zwinglians and possibly more. One valley followed the truth as preached by one reformer, another valley the truth preached by another, as though truth was a matter of geography, and as if two and two, which made four in one Canton, could make five in another. If I was to believe in a religious supernatural truth at all, I felt it must be revealed from above, and not merely the guesswork of any man, however intelligent or however studious.

Had I remembered Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*¹ I should have quoted perhaps one sentence of his when a controversialist declared that Dr. Arnold vouched for his interpretation: "Dr. Arnold answers for his interpretation, but who is to answer for Arnold?" There is

¹ *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, p. 34 (final edition).

the crux of Protestantism : who vouches for Luther, for Zwingli, for Calvin, for John Knox, for Cranmer, for Parker, or any of the other leaders of Protestant thought and founders of Protestant communities which had become largely purveyors of "truths" having geographical, and not universal, limits? Surely however universality must be one of the essential qualities or characteristics of truth.

One thing which especially dissatisfied me with the Anglican Church was that it was "By Law established." Bishops were appointed by Prime Ministers who might well not be of the Church at all, and the very prayers of the Prayer Book and the rubrics of the services had to be accepted and approved by Parliament which might well be composed of Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics of all kinds—that was something I had never been able to swallow ever since I had understood it.

Monsignor Merry del Val listened in silence to my flood of speech—I had never had so good a listener before. Then he said, with a smile, that he understood that there was little for him to do in order to detach me from the Protestant position.

"Now," he said, "as you feel you can no longer belong to any Protestant community, is there anything that prevents you from joining the Catholic Church?"

I at once replied that I had two difficulties which seemed to me insuperable.

Firstly, the belief in eternal punishment, which was, I understood, a part of the Catholic faith.

Secondly, the belief that all those who did not die in the Catholic faith were condemned to eternal punishment.

He said : "Let us take the second question first. When you say you cannot accept it you are, no doubt, thinking of some particular case of those near and dear to you."

I answered that I was thinking particularly of my mother, and that I would not and could not accept any faith which condemned her to eternal punishment because

she did not die professing the Catholic faith, and that, wherever her spirit was, there I would wish to follow.

Monsignor Merry del Val then said that no Catholic may say of any soul—no matter what its beliefs or its actions on earth—that it has been condemned eternally. It is for God alone to judge in the last resort, and not for any man, even the Pope, who can only ex-communicate, i.e. declare a living person no longer a member of the Church on earth. Our Lord Himself on the Cross never declared that those who crucified Him and reviled Him would be damned. On the contrary, He prayed for them because they knew not what they did. The only declaration as to a future state He then made was the definite one that the penitent thief would be saved. The Church taught only that the Catholic faith was true and held, what the Apostles taught, that to believe in it was necessary for salvation. At the same time the Catholic Church taught that those who through no fault of their own had lived in invincible ignorance of the truth of Catholic doctrine, but yet lived an upright, charitable and righteous life according to their lights, would undoubtedly be pardoned by God for the offences they had committed. It was impossible for us, he continued, to know by what ways God the All Merciful would condone offences, even want of faith in Him and in the truths revealed to His Church. Only one thing we could say without doubt—this was that those who, having seen the light, having understood the glory of God, deliberately and consciously turned their backs on Him and professed the devil and all his works could, clearly, not be pardoned their offences because they themselves did not wish it. All men were given at some time or other the freedom, the complete and clear freedom, of choice between God on the one side and the devil on the other. Once they deliberately rejected Him no further hope was possible. They got that which they themselves had chosen. We could not tell how or when God would so reveal Himself to us. It might be for us a long process, a matter of

years ; it might be done in the twinkling of an eye at the very moment of death, for time was nothing to God ; a thousand years were as a day in His sight. Therefore we mortals could never say that any man was condemned. All we knew was that God was both all just and all merciful. It was for us to act so as to deserve His mercy if we could. We should indeed all have to pay the penalty in purgatory for our temporal sins, but unless we committed the unpardonable offence against the Holy Ghost by refusing to accept God when He was revealed to us we need, and indeed should never despair, either for ourselves or others.

I said that I had never understood the Protestant objection to the doctrine of purgatory, which seemed to be logically necessary in a system which worshipped a God Who was both all just and merciful, and that, explained as Monsignor Merry del Val had explained it, the doctrine of eternal punishment by eternal exile from the presence of God because that exile was deliberately and knowingly chosen seemed, to me, not only believable but logically unanswerable.

I then asked for the explanation of the existence of suffering and sin in the world, and it was explained to me that when God gave men freedom of choice between good and evil, which they undoubtedly had, so that they might be to that extent in His likeness and higher than the angels, sin and suffering, which were the corollary of that freedom, had to take their place in the world. Suffering was indeed for man rather a privilege than the reverse, for just as Our Lord offered His sufferings on earth as a sacrifice for mankind, so each one of us could make use of our sufferings by offering them up to God on behalf of our friends in imitation of the action of Our Lord. There was no such consolation in suffering as the knowledge that by offering up our sufferings humbly and readily we could, for instance, reduce the pains of purgatory for our friends and relations. As regarded sin, however, it was our duty, in accordance with the rules of the Church, carefully to examine our



SECTION OF PALAZZO BANDINI, VIA DEL SUDARIO, ROME DESIGNED BY RAPHAEL

consciences to see in what we might have offended, and then to make a confession of our offences with a humble and contrite heart and accept whatever penance the priest might impose. This was a wise and necessary decree of the Church so that men should realise the more readily how they were offending God.

My lessons, if I can call them so, covered a period of three or four weeks, generally lasting an hour in the morning.

One day I asked how I was to know that the Church differed from other self-styled teachers of revealed religion as opposed to natural law. He asked me if I believed Christ to be the Son of God, and I declared I did because He spoke as no man had ever spoken and because He clearly taught that He was the Son of God. "Then," he said, "you must believe Him to be infallible, and no word of His can have been spoken in error." I replied, of course I believed that. After that we went through the various texts of the New Testament on which the Papal claims for the infallibility of the Church, not only at that time but for the future, are based.

I remember naturally the tremendous and overwhelming force of the great text: "Thou art Peter (the Rock) and upon this rock I will build my Church." I thought how I had puzzled at school over this apparently meaningless saying: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock." What rock? I was always taught that the Apostles were equal and therefore this particular text was simply slurred over and no explanation attempted, because none other than the Catholic could be given or accepted by any unprejudiced seeker after truth. Read indeed without prejudice by a non-Christian (whom I take as an impartial witness between Catholic and Protestant) there can, in my opinion, be no doubt that the Petrine texts must be considered as decisive in favour of the Catholic position.

Thus we went on from point to point.

After these lessons I used often, on leaving the Vatican, to wander up the Janiculum and sit under Tasso's oak where, according to the memorial stone, St. Philip Neri

used *tra liete grida*¹ to play as a child among the children. There I would meditate quietly on what I had heard, looking out over the city and the campagna to my beloved Alban and Sabine mountains.

One day here, after I had been convinced that there really was an inspired authority for Christian truth and that this authority could be no other than the Catholic Church *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, I felt myself for a short space surrounded by and breathing in, as it were, the sense of the presence of God. Motionless I sat, feeling now certain that God was not only far away in Heaven but also on earth helping those who asked Him with a real desire to draw near. It was a sensation as of being buoyed up in a boundless ocean or floating through an infinite space, supported and sustained by clear certainty from which all doubt was banished.

Ever since that day Tasso's oak, now, alas, but a dried shell, has been a sacred thing for me.

No doubt this experience may be ascribed to the somewhat *exalté* condition of mind in which I found myself at the time. I do not for a moment wish to suggest that I was the subject of any unusual mystical visitation. Once again later I experienced the same sensation which shall be recounted in its proper place.

Meanwhile I must add this one point more with reference to these conversations. I suppose that each of those who have, after passing most of their lives in the "freedom" of Protestantism or complete unbelief, "submitted to the yoke of the Catholic Church," have found some part of its doctrine and practice which specially appealed to them, becoming, as it were, a sort of nucleus round which the rest of their religious life revolved. So at least it was with me. As soon as, with Monsignor Merry del Val's help, I had gone over all the well known texts in support of the doctrine of the real Body and Blood of Our Lord actually being in the bread and wine of the Eucharist in accordance with His promise to remain with His Church on earth for ever; after I had studied

¹ "With joyful cries."

the sacrifice of the Mass and seen how this differed from the purely human services of other churches, I felt that this was the loadstone that would draw me irresistibly into the arms of the Church. Surely nothing so spiritual and at the same time so genuinely tangible could have been "invented" by any mere man. Our Lord's words in regard to this seemed to me perfectly clear, and their meaning not open to doubt. Those who would not accept them in their obvious significance He allowed to leave Him without any word of explanation in a Protestant sense. In fact, those disciples who left Him at Capharnaum over this question and "walked no more with Him" became for me the first Protestants.

It might be a hard saying indeed but what a marvellous help and support when once accepted with mind and heart and soul. It is quite incredible that any mere man should have conceived so amazing a thing as this, so utterly simple and yet so utterly divine. For this reason, if for no other, it appeared to me to bear the stamp of divine truth which to deny was to deprive oneself of the greatest assistance which the Saviour left behind him on earth for men.

The definition of this mystery mattered, I confess, little to me. Whether it was to be defined as the presence of Our Lord in the species or whether the substance of the species were changed was a matter I was quite content to leave to the infallible Church to define. What did matter to me was that there in the bread and wine on the altar was truly Our Lord Jesus Christ coming again and again to us in accordance with His promise. Then, when I thought that in every part of the world from before dawn to midday, Our Lord was appearing thus in this most humble guise to his Faithful, making a girdle of his presence round the world, I realised as in no other way the grandeur of the universality of the Holy Catholic Roman and Apostolic Church; Holy because inspired from above; Catholic, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*; Roman because her head the Viceregent of Christ on earth was the Bishop of Rome, the successor

in direct line of St. Peter, the rock on which Our Lord founded the Church ; Apostolic because her descent from the Apostles could be historically proved.

So at Mass, which I began now to attend frequently, these thoughts filled my mind ; I worshipped there the presence of Jesus the Son of God and rejoiced to think that I was about to be privileged to be one of the millions who could so worship Him, all in the same way and with the same words, no longer a member of a mere national Church, dependent on questions of latitude and longitude for what I was to hold as truth.

I look back to that time as the happiest of my life, and to those hours spent with Monsignor Merry del Val as undoubtedly the most supremely useful I have ever passed.

For him I have always felt the liveliest gratitude and affection. His was a really wonderful personality, combining nearly all the most essential qualities of a Christian priest and an entirely human hearted man with a keen mind and much erudition. He had a quite exceptional charm of manner and a great gift for various languages — Spanish and English were his father and mother tongues. He spoke also perfect Italian and French and, I believe, excellent German, so that he was well equipped for his post when, some years later, Pius X appointed him his Cardinal Secretary of State at an unusually early age. He desired no honours ; indeed, he most of all wished to be a parish priest in some poor district in England.

When the time came for me to return to England I told both Monsignor Merry and my fiancée, for matters had now proceeded so far between us that I could call her so, that I would but read a few more books recommended me by the Monsignor, and then make my "submission" to the Church. My mind was fully made up, but I still wanted to be better instructed in the doctrines and history of the Church, particularly with regard to the very important point of continuity from Apostolic times. Monsignor Merry agreed with this.

So I left for England to prepare for my journey to Trinidad with my good friend Thorleif Orde in order to select and purchase an estate on which to grow rubber and cocoa and start the plantation before returning to Rome in the autumn for my marriage.

CHAPTER XIII

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. RUBBER PLANTING IN TOBAGO

(1898)

BY May, 1898, all preliminary arrangements being completed, I started with Thorleif Orde from England by Royal Mail steamer for Trinidad, where I was instructed by the Syndicate to select and buy a property for the rubber plantation. In those days the larger Royal Mail ships on the West Indian line went only to Barbadoes and Jamaica. At Barbadoes they were met on arrival by smaller "intermediate" boats, which carried passengers to other West Indian destinations. The whole journey from England to Trinidad took about a fortnight.

At Port of Spain Thorleif and I put up at the Queen's Park Hotel, a new building at that time, facing the Savannah Park.

I called at once on Mr. Hart of the Botanical Gardens, who had been so helpful the year before, to ask his advice respecting the best district to look for land.

He suggested we should first try the district around Arima, about fifteen miles east of Port of Spain, whither we went after getting through preliminary business in Port of Spain.

In the little town of Arima we hired an empty house by the week and some furniture, we engaged a darkie "general servant," two horses and a groom, and a very energetic Barbadian, who knew the country round and had a supreme contempt for all Trinidadians. For a fortnight or three weeks we were very busy looking at plantations and properties for sale for miles round, but we could find nothing that suited us in this district. All lands suitable

for plantation had been taken up years ago by sugar or cocoa planters, and, besides being more expensive than we cared for, were, it seemed, unsuitable for our purpose. Nevertheless we enjoyed our stay at Arima greatly and there laid the foundation of a life-long friendship. Having turned down that area of Trinidad we went back to Port of Spain to get information about other parts of the island.

Both Sir Hubert Jerningham, the Governor, Mr. Hart and one or two friends we had met, advised us to try the island of Tobago, which lies thirty miles north-east of Trinidad, and where, we were told, there were several fine properties being abandoned for almost absurd prices. A little steamer left Port of Spain twice a week for Scarborough, the "capital" of Tobago.

We decided that we would go over and spy out the land.

I knew nothing about Tobago, but I at once bought a map of the island and an old history of it. From the map I learnt that it was about twenty-six miles long from S.W. to N.E. and seven across in the broadest part, that it had a backbone of hills covered with forest, rising in the east to 1,800 feet, from which numberless small rivers discharged themselves into bays, some almost land-locked, that the western end, where Scarborough bay lay, was of coral formation, low and sandy, and had been entirely under sugar, while the eastern end was hilly, even mountainous, divided into deep valleys, each of which formed, as a rule, a separate property having its own stream and ending in a flat piece of land, which had invariably been under sugar, and a shipping bay where schooners could lie and take in produce and discharge goods required for the plantation.

Road communication was, I was told, of the most primitive kind because practically all transport was carried by schooners from Scarborough to the shipping bays of the different plantations with their accessory villages.

From the history of Tobago I learnt that the S.W. part was traditionally believed to be the scene of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, that the island had changed hands more

frequently than any other in the West Indies, having been successively Spanish, Dutch, French, British, and even at one time having been assigned to the Duke of Livland or Lithuania! There was no mention of any great or stirring battles having been fought there, but it seems to have acquired a curious habit of changing masters with every peace signed after every European war during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As the whole length of the south coast of the island was exposed to the trade winds, which blew nearly all the year round, we were told it was, for a tropical climate, decidedly healthy and that there were fewer insect pests than in Trinidad. Finally it possessed no venomous snakes or reptiles.

We set out for Tobago with much curiosity and even enthusiasm.

Our first experience of Tobagonians was curious. On the steamer was a darkie who was returning home from Trinidad. He was rather late and had evidently promised a special tip to the boatman, who arrived, pouring with sweat, just as the steamer was leaving, and who was not at all satisfied with the tip when received. But the Tobagonian jumped on to the companion ladder with his two or three bundles and the steamer got under way. Then began a most educative match in strong language in the Trinidadian and Tobagonian dialects, which ended up with:

"Well, anyhow de Trinidad niggers is all rascally tief and robbers."

To which the Trinidadian replied, shaking his fist from his boat:

"An' of all de black trash dere is in de worl' de Tobago nigger is de wuss."

The passengers on the steamer, including ourselves, were delighted with the exchange of compliments.

It took us about eight hours to reach Scarborough. A pleasant little bay sheltered from the trade winds but open to the west, the shore fringed with graceful coco-nut palms, a little town with a brick court-house in a square,

shaded by great mango trees, and some flamboyant trees then in flower with their glorious coloured spikes, a few brick stores, a number of irregular negro wooden shanties, and some better houses belonging to richer storekeepers or retired Civil Servants, with palms waving over all, a wooden church or two and an old quay or pier in a state of general dilapidation ; on a hill about a mile out of the town, " Government House," where lived the Administrator, standing in " its own grounds," with various kinds of palms and other trees and a semblance of a garden, a fine, great, old-fashioned cool house built partly of bricks, partly of planks, with the inevitable eighteenth century Fort on another hill. In the streets some planters and richer merchants in topees and white ducks, riding ponies, with negro women carrying baskets of fruit on their heads and negro men strolling about as if eternity belonged to them.

Such was Scarborough in 1898, and it had hardly changed when I last saw it in 1929, except for a few Ford cars and a wireless station at the Fort. It would not, perhaps, appeal to everyone, but I thought it then and still think it perfect of its kind.

We put up at a lodging-house outside the town, kept by an old coloured lady and her elderly coloured daughter. Everything was spotlessly clean, large rooms with windows opening on to the sea, a garden with mango trees and gourds and red peppers and a few roses that looked sadly out at elbows. There was also a perfect miniature bay for bathing. Here we quickly made ourselves at home, and here we always put up whenever we had to go into Scarborough for business.

We had a letter for Captain Short, a retired officer of the Army who had bought one of the best estates on the island, Richmond, which he was rapidly turning into a first-rate cocoa plantation. He had bought it, like most of the old sugar estates, in a condition of ruin and dilapidation. Having got two horses and a boy to look after them, we set out for Richmond as soon as possible along what was known as the Windward road, which ran

along the south-east coast of the island and which caught the refreshing trade winds.

Short received us with true West Indian hospitality, asked us to bring our baggage the next day for a stay of two or three days, when he would show us the estates farther up the coast, and after lunch he showed us over a considerable part of his own plantation. It was mainly in cocoa, but he was also experimenting with coffee and limes and other fruit. It had a beautiful little river, with deep pools for bathing, a fine bay in front and a valley running back into the wooded hills behind. The house stood on a little hill overlooking the flat and the old sugar works, and was so placed as to catch all the trade breeze. I had rarely seen a more enchanting spot, and after seeing it both Thorleif and I felt that Tobago, especially as there were now several estates going for a mere song, was the island for us. Labour was very cheap and, in spite of the dictum of the Port of Spain boatman, the Tobago coloured workman was, according to Short, not at all bad. He had the good qualities of most other West Indian agricultural labourers and also their defects.

After settling our business with the principal store-keeper in Scarborough, a fine old Scotsman who, after examining our credentials, decided he could cash our cheques (there being no real bank in the place), and after I had called on the priest, a splendid French Dominican called Father Reginald, and done other minor matters, we set out for Richmond to spend there a few days with Short examining all the estates to be sold in the neighbourhood.

We saw many, and finally settled on one of the largest called "Betsy's Hope," about fifteen miles up the Windward road from Scarborough.

It had been one of the principal sugar estates of the Windward Coast, and the large flat leading to the bay was still, to some extent, under sugar. There was the usual wooden house in considerable disrepair on a hill overlooking the usual large sugar works which were falling to pieces, and the river with its valley running up

into the highest hills of the island. This valley was practically untouched ground and, with the flat, gave us all the land we wanted for a first experiment. There was also a large village on the estate which settled the labour problem for us.

Both Thorleif and I agreed we could not do better than buy this for the Syndicate. It had, in the great days of Tobago some fifty years before, belonged to an old Scotsman who lived on so generous a scale that he was known as the King of Tobago. He was buried just below the house in a small enclosure now almost abandoned, but still bright with many coloured crotons. I was surprised to find many darkies in all the villages with Scots names—McDougalls, Mackintoshes, McLeods and McGillivrays abounded. It appeared that at one time most of the leading planters had been Highlanders.

The purchase of this estate, which the Syndicate approved naturally involved some legal business in Port of Spain, where lived the present owner, Mr. Tucker, who also owned the neighbouring properties of King's Bay and Speyside, both equally lovely in their way. As it seemed that this legal business might be somewhat protracted, and as I was anxious not to lose a day of the *Castilloa* seeding season which was now on, I hired a small house with ground about it suitable for a nursery and half-way along the Windward road between Scarborough and Betsy's Hope, or Louis d'Or as we, reverting to the old name on eighteenth century maps, called our estate from henceforth.

At our temporary dwelling we made all haste to prepare and equip the small nursery for the seedlings with the help of Captain Short, who, as an old planter, knew the ropes. Thorleif hired the necessary labour and set to work forthwith, while I returned to Port of Spain to conclude the purchase and forward parcels of *Castilloa* seed which we bought from the Botanical Gardens.

The making of a nursery is much the same all over the West Indies and, I suppose, the Tropics. Beds of good earth are laid out at convenient distances, shaded by

pergolas over which are laid coco-nut palm leaves. Clean, running water is laid on from a neighbouring stream and led into troughs. A place at once rather sunny and sheltered from the wind must be chosen and good paths made between the beds.

Within a week or ten days from our getting into the nursery house hundreds of seedlings, my green babies, were showing over the black soil.

After they were grown to a certain size they were taken out of the beds and planted separately into pots of hollow bamboo stems, which again are used for the purpose in every tropical nursery.

This business, when you are dealing with thousands of seedlings as we were, entailed much labour, but since we paid as much as any planter in the island, and paid regularly, which all planters did not, we never had the slightest trouble. By September the legal business was completed; I had collected in Port of Spain and Scarborough the necessary furniture, crockery, etc., for the new house; we bought horses, oxen, mules, carts, implements, tools, etc., all the paraphernalia necessary for starting a plantation, all with the help of our friend, Captain Short, and one fine day we moved into the Louis d'Or "Great House," as the planters' houses on the larger estates were always called, in high content with the world and with ourselves, for was not each of these green babies, of which there were thousands being taken up to the new nursery at Louis d'Or in two-wheeled carts drawn by four oxen, going, in a few years, to be worth one pound or even two pounds apiece? Besides, what pleasanter life could a man look forward to than to live in that old West Indian house, now thoroughly swept and garnished, looking out over the flats still untidy with sugar patches, but shortly to be covered with green *Castilloa* standing in rows like soldiers, and down the great avenue of ever-waving coco-nut palms which led out to the green-blue sea and the white breakers where the coral reefs were?

We thought of the lovely sight it would be in a few

years, when the place would be humming with prosperity and our own schooners would lie in the bay to carry off our products to Port of Spain and bring back our weekly requirements.

We organised our labour gangs with the help of the old overseer, a darkie called Stuart, and a most excellent, reliable, hard-working man. We cleared the flats of weeds and old sugar-cane, opened up drains, and laid out plantations. All day we were out from 6.0 a.m. to 12.0 noon and from 2.0 p.m. to 6.0 p.m., when we came home for buckets of cold water to be thrown over us by our servant Quashie, followed by our solitary cocktail, dinner, and a pipe, feeling as no kings could ever have felt. Those were the great days of hope unclouded, of the certainty of success.

It is to those early years I look back when I think of Tobago as one of the most enchanting places on the face of the earth and even, when I returned many years after, when the planting of rubber there had proved a complete failure, and poor Thorleif was struggling along against the hopeless collapse of prices to make cocoa, which we had planted in place of rubber, give even a modicum of profit—even then I felt the Circean enchantment of Tobago and the West Indies and, had I been a free man, I should probably have returned to end my days there as a lotus-eater—but, I hope, a lotus-eater with much kindness in my heart for fellow lotus-eaters, whether white or black.

My planter colleagues interested and entertained me vastly, as did also the Tobagonian negroes—as indeed did human beings everywhere and at all times.

We were too busy to see much of our white neighbours but when we went down to Scarborough we met them at the Club, and every now and again one riding up or down the coast would come in for a cocktail, for a meal or for a bed. They always had plenty of stories to tell about each other's curious and entertaining ways. Some there were who were, no doubt, the very pink of propriety, but many had human weaknesses which provided conversation for their neighbours.

Thus, there was Mr. —, who, generally a most excellent and pleasant fellow, occasionally succumbed to drink, and most unfortunately this was often the case when he came to Scarborough and spent a day in the Planters' Club. This was a small house with about six rooms, one negro servant who cooked and did all the housework, with a well-stocked bar, and odd copies of *Punch* and *The Field* on the sitting-room tables. The members of the Club bore with Mr. —'s vagaries till one day he stripped completely and threatened to throw any other member who entered the Club out of the window. This led, naturally, to a meeting of the committee which regretfully decided that Mr. —, though a very good fellow, must cease to be a member of the Club. When the negro servant who took the bar and cooked the food heard this, he pointed out that Mr. — was the only member of the Club who paid his bill punctually and kept it going. So the committee rescinded their decision and only asked the servant to let members know whenever Mr. — was in the Club and in what condition he was.

Some years later—in 1902 in fact—Thorleif and I were riding round the island in order to visit another property which the Syndicate had bought on the north side—a most delightful spot called Bloody Bay, with a sandy bay, surrounded by hills and high forest, and a little valley containing a perfect rocky stream. On our way down to Scarborough we called on Mr. — and asked him to put us up for the night. He was delighted but, unfortunately, celebrated the occasion too freely. The Boer War was still on and also an eruption of the Soufrière, the volcano on St. Vincent. After supper we sat out in front of the house smoking our pipes and looking out over the sea to the north-west in the direction of St. Vincent, well over one hundred miles away. Suddenly we were astonished to see flashes of light followed by a noise like distant thunder. Then Mr. —'s patriotism burst out like the volcano. He jumped up, shouting for the cook.

“Mrs. Thom, Mrs. Thom! The Boers are bombarding

Tobago. Quick! help me to run up the Union Jack, and I'll get out my six-shooter."

Mrs. Thom, a stout negress, came bustling out and, in the dark, helped to run up the Union Jack on a flag-staff which Mr. — had put up so as to salute H.M. Navy when it passed that way.

While he was busy in this way Thorleif and I—traitors in the camp and ill-requiting his hospitality—searched his room for his six-shooter, which we found and hid in our room. He hunted in vain for it with much grumbling, but finally flung himself on his bed and slept the sleep of a patriot who had done his duty. Next morning he wondered why the Union Jack was flying at half-mast, and upside down.

An incident that caused much excitement and some scandal in the island occurred in the village belonging to the estate next ours, Roxburgh, which was owned by a—for Tobago—wealthy Scotsman, Mr. Archibald, who had built himself a fine house and could entertain like a country gentleman.

One day we were shocked to hear that a murder had been committed in the village of Roxburgh. No such thing had happened in Tobago for thirty years, where the worst crime was petty larceny, which was however both continual and general.

The magistrate, Major Walker, a retired volunteer turned lawyer for Tobago, the doctor, a young coloured Trinidadian, some neighbouring planters, and as many darkies as could crowd into the little court-house attended the inquest. After it was over the "gentry" went to sup with Mr. Archibald at the Great House and Major Walker and the doctor stayed the night. The Major went up first to his room after supper and presently the other guests were roused by a shriek of horror and rage coming from his room. Rushing up, they found the Major in a state bordering on collapse in a chair, pointing to a dark and bloody head that had rolled out on to the floor from an empty petroleum tin that had been upset by him as he came into the room in the dark.

The discovery naturally caused some stir amongst the guests until it was found that the doctor, having few opportunities of dissecting any part of the human body, had secretly cut off the head of the murdered man, packed it in an empty tin, and brought it up to the house, meaning to take it to his surgery the next day. Unfortunately he had left the tin in the Major's bedroom instead of his own.

The latter, being made the object of some merry wit on account of his fright, was furious with the doctor. He lunched with us the next day, told us the whole story, and vowed he would be even with that damned doctor yet. A fortnight later he rode up to the door and invited himself to lunch again. He was in high spirits. After a cocktail or two he could no longer contain himself.

"I've dished that doctor," he said. "I've looked up autopsies in my law book and found that the doctor ought to have examined the state of the heart before giving evidence at the inquest. He never did this, so I've ordered him to exhume the body and do it now. He'll have a real jolly time."

The doctor had to do it, and there was war to the knife between him and the Major as long as they remained in Tobago. But, on the whole, I am not sure whether the law in this case did not successfully make the punishment fit the crime.

One other strange personality among many on the island must be mentioned. This was Mr. L., son of a former Dean or Archdeacon of Trinidad, who owned a beautiful but totally ruined estate at the north-east end of the island, called Man-of-War Bay because ships of the navy often called there on account of the excellent and sheltered anchorage.

He lived entirely alone in the old sugar-works with a number of cats to keep the rats away. The roof was very leaky, and below every leak he cut a large circular hole in the floor in order, as he told callers, to prevent the rain from splashing him when it came through the roof.

He had fallen out with the darkies in the estate village,

whom he accused of having burned his house down. The darkies disliked him greatly because, among other things, he resorted to voodoo tricks to scare them, which they thought, and no doubt properly, was not becoming in a white man. Thus at night he would put a human skull with lights inside in front of his door, which he declared was the best protection anyone could want in an island of twenty thousand negroes with perhaps not more than a hundred whites, if, indeed, there were so many. Thorleif and I paid him a visit one day and he advised us, as newcomers, to do likewise. Then he picked up the skull, patted it affectionately, and said :

"Poor little girl! I knew her well. She lived in Barbados and I bought her skull there. She's a good companion to me now and a great help."

He was an educated man and had some good books in tattered covers. How he lived I never discovered. We used to see him occasionally riding on an old mule all laden with coconuts and bananas which he used to sell in Scarborough, and buy the few things that he needed. Was he mad or only a cynical Diogenes? It was impossible to say.

Talking of voodooism and other African beliefs and customs, there were still plenty of these among the Tobagonian negroes. When a death occurred all the friends and relatives of the deceased would gather in the house for the two nights before the funeral and make a hideous noise, howling and bawling songs of all kinds from "spirituals" to syncopated jazz tunes, clapping their hands in time to keep out the spirit of the late lamented which might, otherwise, return and take possession of the house. They did not, however, forget the spirit's creature comforts, and food and drink were both set out on the doorstep.

From our house on the hill I often heard these curious sounds of revelry going on in the village and knew that someone had died. Sometimes the noise would die down for a time and then revive with still louder shouting, beating of drums and kettles, when it was supposed the

spirit was trying to enter the house. There were also curious stories of witchcraft which, however, I never could verify. But, taking them all in all, except for petty larceny which they could not resist, the Tobagonian negroes were as law-abiding, kindly and, on the whole, reasonably hard-working people as anyone could wish for. One great defect, however, they certainly had. It was impossible to rely on them and, if an employer was compelled to go over to Port of Spain on business for two or three days, it was impossible for him to feel sure that, on returning, the nursery would not be all drooping for want of water, or the cocoa beans not all mildewed for the lack of drying in the sun. Thorleif and I soon got to know their little failings and to protect ourselves against them with the needed continual vigilance.

In October I said good-bye to Tobago, carrying with me a satisfactory report as to the number of seedlings prospering in the nursery. I promised Thorleif to return next summer, and embarked for London much pleased with the progress made, and, above all, with the early prospect of seeing my fiancée soon again and making her my wife before the end of the year. We had corresponded regularly and had thus become better acquainted than ever before. Only one matter had caused a slight cloud. I lost a pocket-book on the beach containing her photograph. This I duly confessed, not, perhaps, taking the offence as seriously as I should have done. She, on the other hand, seemed to consider it quite a serious matter that a photograph of her might have fallen into the hands of some passing negro. I reflected sadly that a life spent in a convent up to the age of sixteen and after that in the salons of Rome might perhaps create a different sense of proportions and values to that of one spent like mine had recently been in the remote corners of the earth. I may say, however, that I never found, then or later on, that our different ways of life till our marriage created any serious difference of opinion. We were, indeed, too entirely united over things that really mattered ever, as Robert Louis Stevenson puts it, in his essay on

Walking Tours : “ In the face of the gigantic stars to split differences between the degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco pipe or the Roman Empire, a million of money or a fiddlestick’s end.”

That has always been a favourite quotation of mine, but I have never been able, in Isa’s presence, to explain away that, in her eyes, somewhat slighting reference to the Roman Empire, or to make it palatable. Italians, however, when one gets to know them, are the most matter-of-fact people in the world.

CHAPTER XIV

RECEPTION INTO CATHOLIC CHURCH, IN TRINIDAD. MARRIAGE IN ROME. OUTBREAK OF BOER WAR AND ENLISTING IN YEOMANRY

(1890-1900)

I OMITTED in the last chapter, which dealt with life as a planter in Tobago, all reference to my reception into the Church, although this took place at that time.

Having on my journey out to Trinidad finished the course of religious reading which Monsignor Merry had set for me, on landing at Port of Spain I sought out Father Coveney, the Superior of the Dominicans who served the Catholic Cathedral. I had letters from Monsignor Merry del Val and from Father Antrobus of the London Oratory stating my case. After two or three interviews, Father Coveney, a most lovable old Irishman, devout, humble, charitable, humorous and kindly, said he would receive me and settled the day and the hour. It was early one morning in St. Dominic's Chapel in the cathedral that the very short ceremony took place, no one being present but Father Coveney, a server and myself, and I heard Mass in the cathedral immediately after.

The ceremony of reception was so simple that, apart from the Mass, it would have made little or no impression on me. I had now for some time considered myself practically a member of the Church, and this ceremony appeared but to set the seal on a matter already settled. Apart, therefore, from the natural satisfaction of concluding a much-desired contract—if I may call it so—I felt no sensation of sudden spiritual light as on that day in Rome under Tasso's oak. This seemed but, as it were, a natural sequence to a decision previously taken.

So I felt also after Confirmation which took place two or three weeks later in Port of Spain.

Another month had passed when Father Reginald, the French Dominican in charge of the Catholic Mission in Tobago, considered that I might receive Holy Communion for the first time according to the Catholic rite. Father Reginald came as near to saintliness as any man I ever met. Untiring in his efforts to look after his scattered flock all over the island, I can see now his spare ascetic figure, clean-cut features and dark eyes and hair, dressed in the white Dominican habit, trotting along on a little brown pony with a large brown gamp held over him to keep off either sun or rain. His principal church was that of the Sacred Heart at Scarborough, a wooden building painted white and blue outside and scrupulously clean within, with unglazed windows and venetian shutters to keep out the sun, opening out on to views of the sea. The coconut palms outside rustled in the wind all through Mass and with the sea made a pleasant music that was never out of tune or time and was thoroughly in harmony with the place. Father Reginald at once took a truly Christian interest in me, and we often met and talked matters over together, but I believe he cared, if one may say so, a good deal more for the souls of his very poor black folk who were but for him left entirely to themselves on that island where he was the only priest. He wore himself to the bone, and at last, like Father Damien, developed leprosy from constantly looking after the wretched creatures who suffered from that most hideous disease. He was then, of course, compelled to leave his little flock and return to France to die in a leper's hospital. R.I.P.

I could realise what the horror of such contact might be, for once, riding along the coast near Bloody Bay, I got off to drink from a spring beside which an old negro was sitting. I began to drink out of my hands when the old man courteously offered me a tin cup. I thanked him, and not wishing to offend, I used it. When I returned it I looked at him. He was a leper. St. Francis

would no doubt have embraced him, but I fear the old man must have read on my face what I felt.

When from time to time I went down to Scarborough, Father Reginald used to talk to me, like an apostle, of the Blessed Sacrament, and one day, taken off from attending to my green babies, I rode down from Louis d'Or to receive my first Communion at his hands in the little white church to the music of rustling palms and of the sea.

Next morning at daybreak I was in the church and ready for early Mass and Communion.

This was indeed the greatest and most wonderful moment of the new spiritual life for me. For the first time I fully realised what the great saints must often have felt, what it means to empty oneself, as one empties a glass of impure water and then to fill oneself again, even if it be but for a moment, at the fountain of life. I realised that Mass is the supreme act of *sacrifice*.

In Mass we offer to God the Irresistible Gift—Jesus Christ. We offer Him in worthy adoration, in perfect gratitude, in fullest expiation, in prevailing petition. But in Him we offer ourselves. Therefore in accepting Him God accepts us.

And within ourselves we offer Him.

Therefore when seeing us God sees His Son.

Christ in us, we in Christ, the Eternal Priest the worthy Oblation ; for ourselves, for the Church, for the World.

It is no wonder that Pius XI has written : " There is nothing greater in the Universe than the Mass."

So it is not surprising that on the long ride back to Louis d'Or along the sea beaches with coco palms, beside the waves which had all the colours of a peacock's neck or a kingfisher's wing, through the village streets where little black children rolled about naked in the dust, along the cliffs where the foolish looking pelicans hovering over the water would suddenly close their wings and plunge head foremost into the waves, I paid no attention to all these sights and sounds now familiar to me, but rode with the same exaltation I had known under Tasso's oak

in Rome with a sense of serene security, of being buoyed up in a boundless ocean and supported in infinite space.

And then a great pity came over me for all those who, thinking themselves so wise, so superior, rejected these gifts altogether and relied

on the continuous cultivation of that Immanent energy which is the lifeblood of religion. Apart from this (i.e. immanent energy) nothing remains but the empty shell or mere curiosity fit only for an anthropological museum.¹

The same reverend evangelical speaker further tells us that :

when the grosser forms of symbolism survived into the higher religions, as typically in the case of sacrifice—in itself a crude form of shedding blood and appropriate only to those who did their own butchering—it needed much verbal reinterpretation to allegorise the primitive act.

So in the eyes of those who rely on their own “immanent energy,” sacrifice, of which the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross must ever be the great example worthy of imitation for his followers, becomes nothing but “a crude form of shedding blood and appropriate only to those who do their own butchering.” It is perhaps, therefore, not to be wondered at that, after our Lord made His great declaration in the synagogue at Capharnaum respecting His Body and His Blood, “many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.” Could these have been the first “evangelicals”?

However, as I said, on that ride home along the windward road of Tobago there was confirmed in me that sense of security gained first under Tasso’s oak on the Janiculum Hill. Therefore Tobago and Rome have become special shrines in my memory.

From that day I can say that, although the first exaltation passed away in the hurly-burly of terrestrial occupations as such rubber planting or diplomatic work, I have

¹ Address by Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, speaking on “Ritualism and Religion.” (*Manchester Guardian*, August 1st, 1934.)

never looked back. Indeed, the security in the protection of Mother Church has but grown from year to year.

For all this I have, in the instance, to thank my dearest Isa, who understood clearly that union in religion must be the true foundation of a happy marriage. Religion surely to her was something very much more alive and definite than the vague description given by the evangelical preacher quoted above, who said :

Religion is, as it were, an extended system of faith healing covering activities of all kinds in so far as they exceed the bounds of calculation.¹

So it was with a peculiar joy and contentment that I was able to write to her that I believed we should in future be united completely in the spirit and that my submission to the Church had been made not because she had asked this, but because for me and henceforth it was the only way.

I returned to London about the beginning of October, made my report to the Syndicate and then left as soon as possible for Rome. My poor mother-in-law was stricken with an illness from which she could not recover, and was anxious that our wedding should take place without delay, in which we were all agreed.

The religious marriage took place very quietly on November 17th in the private chapel of the Palazzo Bandini. The ceremony was performed by Monsignor Merry del Val, which was another link between us. There was a low Mass at 8 a.m., at which only the nearest relations were asked to be present and at which Isa and I went to Communion together for the first time. The wedding service was of the utmost simplicity, just what I should always desire a marriage ceremony to be. After it was over we went upstairs to the *piano nobile*, where the living-rooms were situated, and with all the family partook of a real breakfast, not a great luncheon, as was the habit in England in those days, with toasts and speeches. Next we followed the good old Roman custom

¹ *Ibid*



Photo Lafayette]

LADY ISABELLA HOWARD, DAUGHTER OF PRINCE GIUSTINIANI-BANDINI, NINTH
EARL OF NEWBURGH

1898

for wedded couples of paying our respects to the shrine of St. Peter in our wedding garments. Never certainly did the great square of St. Peter's look more magnificent to me than in the warm autumn sun of that November day. We then returned to our respective homes (mine was, of course, only an hotel) and changed into ordinary garb.

After a short luncheon at Casa Bandini, Isa and I drove away together in a carriage for, fortunately motor-cars had not yet come into public use. Two or three years before, I think, Henry Ford and some five or six others had exhibited a primitive kind of motor at the Chicago Exhibition, and Henry Ford, I have been told, declared himself too poor to pay five dollars for the dinner with which the other inventors wished to celebrate the occasion. But we drove out in state in one of my father-in-law's barouches, and I chose for this honeymoon journey—for it was the only journey we were to have—to drive out through the Porta San Sebastiano, past the little church of *Quo Vadis* and the catacombs of St. Calixtus and St. Sebastian, past Cecilia Metella, along the old Appian Way out towards Monte Cavo and the Alban Hills between the crumbling ruins of the ancient Roman tombs. It was a heavenly autumn afternoon, still and warm, blue and misty, the Campagna green with fresh grass after the autumn rains and many flowers coming out again in a kind of pseudo spring. Yet it was unquestionably autumn, the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, and although I was happy as I had never been before, I felt overcome by the sense of the passing of things and had I then known it I should probably have repeated Claudel's lovely description of autumn¹—more beautiful perhaps even than that of Keats—ending with the fateful words “*c'en est fait.*”

So, shortly before sunset—for we were careful in those days never to be out in the Campagna at sunset—we drove back to our little hotel, the Beausite, which Isa was to exchange for the Palazzo Bandini and where we were

¹ “Octobre” included in the volume of *Morceaux Choisis*.

to spend the next few weeks, because Isa most rightly would not leave her mother when she was so ill.

The day after the religious ceremony we went to the Capitol where the civil marriage was performed by the Syndic of Rome, Prince Poggio-Suasa, who gave us a short homily on the duties of married life. Our witnesses were my father-in-law and Lord Currie, the British Ambassador.

As belonging to the "Black Society" of Rome we also went as a matter of course with my father-in-law to pay our respects to the Pope Leo XIII, and I shall never forget the impression that audience made.

I had never before been presented to the Pope, and even now, after so many audiences with Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XI, the ceremony impresses me far more than that of an audience at any other court that I have attended.

On that day there was enough to make the occasion memorable for me. First Isa, dressed in black silk and on her head a black lace mantilla, with a few diamond broaches to keep it in position, seemed to me more beautiful than ever before. Then my old father-in-law, well over six feet tall and slightly bowed, with his handsome features, white hair and kindly blue eyes, whom the Swiss Guards, in varicoloured sixteenth century costumes, saluted at the entrance to the Vatican and on every landing as we climbed the long stairs; finally the great halls, with innumerable pilgrims in black sitting awaiting their public audience; the papal domestics in scarlet with white ruffs, the *camerieri segreti*, gentlemen in-waiting, in black with ruffs and swords, the officers of the guard in Napoleonic uniforms, the Monsignori and cardinals in their respective colours, priests, members of the different Orders, brown Franciscans, black Benedictines, white Dominicans and others, and then at last, after passing through innumerable waiting-rooms, we entered a larger room, where, before a great writing-table on which stood an ivory crucifix, that extraordinary presence—for one can call him no other—Leo XIII, all in white, with a

gold chain about his neck and the most impressive head I ever saw on a human body. Emaciated so that it appeared more like that of a corpse than a living man, with a skin like transparent parchment, a great mouth, great nose, great ears and great forehead, and deep set in the head the two most living lustrous black eyes that man ever saw. Once you raised your eyes to those eyes they held you fascinated ; you could see nothing else.

After our three genuflexions and kissing the Fisherman's ring we were waived by the ivory hand to three large carved gilt chairs, my father-in-law naturally occupying that nearest His Holiness. The conversation was not remarkable ; how should it have been ? Congratulations to Isa and me, questions to my father-in-law about his family and great concern for the health of Princess Bandini, the Papal Benediction for us all and it was over. We kissed the ring again on our knees, made two more genuflexions and passed out of the room.

There was very little to record in it all, but once again I felt as if I had stood in the presence of a master of men. The other two were very different—Bismarck and Cecil Rhodes—but while Bismarck and Rhodes were colossal men of action, Leo XIII was intellect personified.

Isa and I were happy not to be compelled to accept any invitations. Isa visited her mother daily, and so did I when I was permitted to do so, and I was filled with admiration for her spartan stoicism and uncomplaining acceptance of pain. On December 15th the end came, and after a few days more with her family Isa decided we could leave for Porto Fino to spend Christmas with my sister Elsie Carnarvon at her villa there.

Those quiet days in those enchanting surroundings made Porto Fino then and since a place of special attachment for her as well as for me, and I besides was most glad that these two, sister and wife, should during those trying hours have become fast and life-long friends.

Isa was completely and entirely devoted to her mother, so that these last days were, indeed, days of grief. But, as always, in moments of great sorrow she found her Faith

a pillar of support, and this, combined with her great strength of mind, which was like that of an ancient Roman matron, never for a moment allowed her to give way. Nevertheless, the suppression of outward expression also took its toll, and she was very weary when we finally left for England. My admiration for her character increased day by day. It is surely in trials such as these that true character can be properly appraised.

After the New Year (1899) we went home slowly from Porto Fino—Turin, Paris, London.

In Turin, on that occasion, I saw an unforgettable sight. In the morning after our arrival I left Isa resting at the hotel and walked along up to the Superga, the burial-place of the Dukes of Savoy and Kings of Sardinia. There was a thick mist, and it seemed that nothing could ever again be visible through it. I stood on the terrace before the church when suddenly, like the curtain of a theatre, the mist began slowly to rise. First the city below me, then the valley of the Po, then the foothills of the Alps, and finally the white glittering crests of Mont Cenis, of Mont Blanc, and of others stretching away to the east as far as the eye could reach. Above was an immaculate turquoise sky, and all was painted and vividly coloured by the clean light of the winter sun. When seen in such circumstances the view from the Superga is certainly one of the most magnificent in the world.

Then Paris for two or three days was a source of great interest, and finally the landing at Dover and the journey up to London provided Isa with much novelty and excitement since she had never been out of her own country before. After the greenness of the fields and the comfort and cleanliness of the railway carriages of those days in comparison with the Continental ones the thing that pleased and amazed her most was, I believe, the size of the sheep in the fields of Kent—the backs of which she declared were as broad as tea-trays, so that, if trained, they would be useful for bringing in the morning cup of tea. I replied that I often thought the backs of the sheep in the Campagna might serve as razors.

We stayed a short time in London, just long enough for her to meet some members of my family. Being in strict mourning, we did not accept any invitation outside the family circle, and then, as soon as possible, we went on to Ravenstone, where we spent quietly and most happily the only entire summer we ever passed there together.

Towards September I felt the time had come to keep my promise to revisit Tobago, which I did, Isa returning to her father's country place, Fiastra, in the Marche near Macerata.

I found everything going on splendidly at Louis d'Or. Scores of acres had been planted with last year's rubber seedlings, which were now three feet high on the average. Thousands more green babies were sprouting in the nursery. It seemed as though our choice of the Castilloa tree and of Tobago would be amply justified. I spent about six very happy weeks with Thorleif Orde, to whom I became ever more and more attached, and we arranged that the following year I should come out to take his place on the plantation and he should have a holiday. But things were to turn out very differently.

Before I left Tobago the Boer War had already begun. Both Thorleif and I, as old South Africans, were deeply interested in the turn things had taken, and I for one most deeply regretted it.

I had, since my visit to South Africa eight years before, been impressed and oppressed with the feeling that something of the kind might happen one day. The English were clearly chafing at the retrograde ways of the "Doppers," of whom President Kruger was the type and figurehead, while Boers, of the Transvaal at least, always regarded the English as new-comers and interlopers who must agree to the unfair conditions imposed on them in order to be allowed to make money on the Rand gold mines for themselves and the Transvaal Government. It was not altogether unusual to find Boers who, over a camp fire, would tell one, without, however, any kind of personal feeling, that South Africa was theirs by divine

right, and some day or other the English would have to be driven into the sea or become proper Boers. That was a state of mind on both sides which must inevitably lead to a conflict unless it was handled not only with wisdom but also with tact and sympathy.

Rhodes had set out at first to make all possible advances to the South African Dutch, and had advanced so far in this direction that he had incurred the hostility of many English South Africans, and the suspicions of the out and out Imperialists in England. But he was blocked along the path of conciliation leading to an autonomous Union of South Africa federated with Great Britain and the other great colonies (now Dominions) by the obstinate refusal of the old President of the Transvaal to grant the Rand Uitlanders any political concession which they considered worth while. So year after year the situation became more tense and more complicated, until Rhodes lost patience and sanctioned the idea of supporting an armed movement in Johannesburg, the object of which was to extort a large measure of franchise from the old President. This resulted also in the famous Jameson Raid, which was, surely, one of the greatest fiascos in history. I have been given graphic descriptions of the raid by eyewitnesses. One incident especially remains in my mind. Before the raid started a trooper was sent out at night to cut the telegraph wires on the Transvaal side of the border. He was discovered next day by the raiders slumbering quietly beside a cut wire fence with an empty whisky bottle beside him.

In Johannesburg itself, where the *Putsch* was to have started so as to give an excuse for the raid, which was seized by poor Alfred Austin, the Poet Laureate, to write one of the most fatuous poems ever penned in the cause of super-patriotism, all was chaos and disorder. Should the conspirators move or should they not? Had not Jameson moved before receiving orders and given everything away? Were they then in honour bound to risk their necks for his sake? They did not like it. Countless whiskies and sodas were consumed and cigars smoked

discussing these and similar important questions, until news arrived that Jameson had surrendered with all his followers and the game was up. So they surrendered, too, and three of the ringleaders, all well known in the City of London, were seized, tried by the Transvaal authorities and condemned to death—which was afterwards commuted to a few years' or months of imprisonment. Such was, more or less, the story I heard from my old friend Seymour Fort, who was on the spot (I had known him in 1891 as Private Secretary to Lord Loch, Governor of the Cape). He made a good story out of it all, but it was, for some time, serious enough for certain of the actors and ought to have cured them for ever of wishing to take part in a *Putsch* organised by a medico at one end and some company directors at the other. One thing is certain, that Jameson had, as Rhodes said, "upset the apple cart."

As regards Rhodes, the only possible explanation of his share in this adventure would seem to be that he knew he had not long to live and wanted to reach his objective by a short cut.

In any case, the whole business was fatal to the cause he had advocated so long and with such success, and the South African War broke out, leaving behind it an aftermath which has hardly yet been cleared away.

Two men more than any others, however, have helped to realise Rhodes ideal, both of them Boers, and both in high command against the British during the South African War—Botha and Smuts. The recent fusion of the parties of General Smuts and Hertzog in South Africa may perhaps accomplish what Rhodes, the British Empire builder, failed hopelessly to carry through.

This would be one of those curious paradoxes in British history by which, in the most unexpected ways, Great Britain or the British Empire carries on in spite of all. How much longer will it do so? God knows, but I have an immense confidence in the political wisdom of the Anglo-Saxon English-speaking world, based on common sense, empiricism, and in the long run, on justice

for all. I believe that these qualities will enable the partners of the Great British Commonwealth of Nations to navigate the ship of the Commonwealth through all the mine fields laid by Jingos and little Englanders, by doctrinaires (from whom, thank heaven, we suffer less than most people) and lunatics, by megalomaniacs and micromaniacs, and, above all, by those who understand human nature so little that they aim at pouring it all into one mould.

To return, however, to the South African War. Like all Englishmen, I was optimistic that it would be concluded before Christmas, 1899, and I went out to join Isa in Italy that autumn without the slightest thought of taking any active part in it, however humble.

When, however, news of one repulse after another reached us and it became clear that there was a protracted struggle ahead, and when, as a result of this the Government called for volunteers for the mounted infantry, it seemed to me that I ought to go. I could ride and shoot mediocresly but well enough, I could speak the Afrikaner Dutch also mediocresly, and understand it, and I knew the country more or less. Whoever was right or wrong in the quarrel—and I frankly liked the interests of the City as little as I did Old Kruger and his Doppers—I felt, looking at the matter from a large and wide point of view, very strongly that the Boers were out to push the British off South Africa into the sea and so end Rhodes's dream in that part of the world. And for the idealistic side of that dream I stood fast; the mistakes made by Rhodes and, *a fortiori*, by Jameson and the rest mattered little in comparison with the one great objective, the maintenance and the future of the British Commonwealth. I cannot say that I foresaw how things would ultimately turn out, but I hoped that if we could stem the first magnificent onrush of the Boers, for whom I had a great respect and admiration, we should somehow come to terms and learn to live together in brotherhood and amity. The event has, I hope and believe, turned out as I desired, though not quite as I expected. However that may be,

about Christmas I spoke to Isa about my feelings that I ought to enlist in the Yeomanry. It was like her antique Roman nature to agree with me entirely on this point. We had had together one year of, for me at least, undreamt of happiness and union, but where she felt the call of duty she never, then or since, showed the slightest hesitation. Therefore, saying good-bye to her family and our friends in Rome, we started for London about the New Year.

It took but a short time to present myself for enlistment in the Yeomanry. I was over age, but when the recruiting authorities heard I knew South Africa, could speak the Taal to a certain extent, had ridden to hounds and done some big game shooting, they at once told me to enter my birth a year or two after the proper date, and took me on.

Hearing of a corps that was to be made up of young men who would pay their own expenses as to outfit, etc., and would waive their pay, I joined up in this. It was called "The Duke of Cambridge's Own" and known as D.C.O.

I was lucky to find some friends and acquaintances among the recruits.

CHAPTER XV

THE BOER WAR: LETTERS HOME.¹ TAKEN PRISONER AT LINDLEY, O.F.S. INVALIDED AT VREDE, O.F.S.

(1900)

IT was a wild and stormy day in the middle of February, 1900, when the Duke of Cambridge's Own sailed from Southampton for Cape Town in the liner *Dunvegan Castle*. So far as I can remember, the whole of the second class had been reserved for us. The departure was, for me at least, far from exhilarating. I had hardly recovered from a rather severe attack of influenza which had kept me in bed and in the house up to the moment of departure, and it was in a howling gale and driving rain that I last saw Isa standing on the quay and gradually fading into the crowd of those who had come to see their friends and relations off. When I could distinguish her no more, I went down to my berth feeling as far from heroic as it was possible to be.

The storm raged for three days and nights. Two life-boats were so badly damaged that they were thrown overboard, while two others were seriously staved in. We nearly all had our cabins flooded with sea water. Most of those on board were completely *hors de combat*, but though I disliked it the storm entirely cured me of all remains of influenza.

As soon as the weather improved somewhat we had parades at 6.30 a.m., and after that various drills and physical exercises on the second class deck, which were watched and criticised by numbers of officers from generals downwards. Then breakfast, after which a parade

¹ For the story of my experiences in the South African War I am not compelled to rely on memory only, as was the case in previous chapters, for Isa kept all or most of my letters to her in which the happenings from week to week are recorded.

followed by lectures on military subjects. Lunch at 1.30, and then another parade with exercises up to 4.30, when we had two hours off till dinner. At 10 o'clock we turned in. We also mounted guard in different parts of the ship, especially over four chargers belonging to our officers. I find in a letter : " Last night we laughed till we cried because one of the guard came in to the smoking-room wet through. He had on one of those knitted helmets, a big cavalry coat, large spectacles and a most innocent and rather professional expression. Then in a somewhat injured voice he announced : ' They told me to mount guard over five horses, but I can only find four horses and a cow.' " We had reached the point of puerility where one is easily amused.

Once the storm ended all recovered their spirits and the fashionable attitude was to hope loudly that the " show " would not be over before we reached the Cape. Personally, I always felt that the sooner the " show " ended successfully for England the better it would be for all concerned, but I was wise enough to hold my tongue. There were friends on board outside the Corps, who would come down from the first-class deck to keep us company, and so the journey out, once the storm was over, passed pleasantly enough. On the way out we heard welcome news from a passing ship that Ladysmith had been relieved. This caused an assumed gloom among those who feared the " show " would soon be over, but rejoiced those who had no pretensions to unnecessary valour. I was particularly glad on account of my cousin Redvers Buller, whose conduct of the operation for the relief of Ladysmith had been severely criticised. I am no soldier, but a later examination of the Tugela lines held by the Boers convinced me that he was certainly right when he stated that they could only be carried by a flanking movement and asked for troops required for the purpose. These were, of course, denied him, and he was compelled to do the best he could with what he had. Our subsequent frontal attacks and the consequent losses were due, like the far more terrible

disasters on the Gallipoli peninsula in the Great War, much more to the obstinate lack of foresight on the part of the military authorities in London than to the general at the front.

We reached Cape Town on March 8th in beautiful autumn weather, and I rejoiced to see Table Mountain again and Table Bay and the Lion's Head, and the many landmarks I remembered so well. Nothing seemed to have changed very much in Cape Town or the suburbs, which were as attractive as ever, but I had little time to revisit old haunts, for we were hard at work from morning to night.

On the afternoon of our arrival we marched out to our camp at Matjesfontein, pitched our tents, etc., and the following days were kept busy disembarking horses just arrived from England (a sorry lot they were, too ; I got a black cob that was so lazy it would hardly trot) and bringing them up to McKenzie's Farm. In the course of leading these mounts up we had two or three casualties, and one of my "four," Teddy Goschen,¹ got a bad kick on the jaw which sent him to hospital for some days. After many days' work in the dust and heat I felt I badly needed a bath and was very indignant to find I was not allowed to go alone to Cape Town for a bath, but could only go with a squad and a non-commissioned officer in charge. I, who had been on foot alone in the forests of tropical Africa and Brazil, was supposed to be incapable of looking after myself in Cape Town. This seemed to me to be the supreme outrage. Everything else came in the day's work and I was glad of it, but this—my indignation knew no bounds. Was it really necessary, I asked myself, to treat even the youngest Tommy like a child in the nursery ? And if so, were no exceptions to be made to the rule ? I was not the only indignant Yeoman and finally, as the result of the feeling on this matter, the rule was relaxed and we were able to go into Cape Town "on our own" when we had an afternoon or evening free. The result

¹ Son of Sir Edward Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin when the Great War broke out.

was that I more than once got invitations to dine with old friends and even with generals, particularly Lord Castletown, who was especially kind and used to ask me to the Mount Nelson Hotel (the Ritz of Cape Town) to have a bath and dine—those were always the terms of the invitation. The sight of troopers dining with generals at the Mount Nelson was a novelty up to that time, but later on this peculiar war produced other innovations that would have made the hair of old stagers stand on end.

The following description of our day at Matjesfontein Camp will best explain what it meant to be invited to "bath and dine" at the Mount Nelson.

"Our day begins at 6 a.m. with watering and grooming the horses, after which breakfast of bread and black coffee (and what coffee!), but I generally go over to a tent kept by some German Jews and get a cup of milk and some bread and butter and grapes. Then we clean up our tents, etc., and parade for drill about 9 a.m. till 12. Then dinner, some stewed beef with boiled potatoes. In the evening, after watering, feeding and seeing to the horses, we have tea and bread again. These are our meals for the day. If it was not for the Jews we should fare badly. . . . However, with all this, I am exceedingly well."

From the above it is clear that our principal preoccupations during all this preliminary period before we went up country were connected with cleanliness and food. In fact, we became as nearly as possible reduced to the mentality of animals as a civilised human being can, and this, I suppose, is true of all soldier-men on campaign. This unavoidable return among rankers to the mentality of cave men accounts, no doubt, for many barbarities in the wars of the past. The barbarities of war in the future, however, will be, as they were to a great extent from 1914 to 1918, due to the deliberate policy of leaders to make use of every weapon science has placed at their disposal to end the war at the earliest possible moment. Hitler, in his *Mein Kampf*, if I remember rightly, quotes with

approval a saying of Moltke that the most humane way of dealing with war is to end it as soon as possible, it being understood, presumably, that it should be ended by victory for the home team. So far, no doubt, we can all agree, but the question arises: By what means? No one will probably think that the bombing of open cities and the promiscuous slaughter of men, women and children by poison gases can be called humane in any sense of the word. It can hardly even be an article of faith in that "Religion of Valour" which Treitschke hoped was to take the place of Christianity in the German heart. So we are driven to the paradoxical conclusion that war, in order to be "humane," must inevitably be conducted by the most extreme methods of barbarism and that whatever may be laid down in pacts or treaties for the more humane conduct of war is bound to go down before the greater humanity of the ideal of warfare, namely in Moltke's words, that it should be ended as soon as possible, it being understood that the means will always justify the end.

From Maitland Camp we went up to Stellenbosch, a very pleasant place of gardens and orange groves and running water. Near this Mr. John K. Merriman, former Prime Minister of the Cape and supporter of Rhodes's policy of good will between English and Dutch in South Africa, had a farm and delightful country house called "*Schoon gesicht*." When he heard that I was with my Yeomanry in the neighbourhood he at once invited me over for an afternoon when I was free.

Although he was, with his Cape Dutch wife, regarded as a violent pro-Boer by the Cape English, I obtained leave from the colonel to accept his invitation. I was glad to go as I was genuinely attached to both of the Merrimans, who had been most kind to my mother and myself nine years before on the occasion of my first visit to the Cape. Though I was glad to see them the visit was a painful one as he not unnaturally took the view that the war was all due to the criminal folly of Rhodes and the Uitlanders, who had wrecked every hope of an Anglo-

Dutch agreement at the Cape for all time, while I contended that honours in this respect were evenly divided between Rhodes and Kruger, and I told him that, while I deplored the war as much as he, and while I even believed it could have been avoided with greater goodwill and skill, once it had broken out I felt it my duty to do what little I could to be of service to my country, believing as I did that the defeat or surrender of Great Britain in South Africa would have disastrous results throughout the whole British Empire, and, indeed, throughout the whole world. We can now, I think, see clearly enough what a tremendous stimulus such an ending would have given to the aims and policies of the German "*Weltmacht*" fanatics of the v. Treitschke and v. Bernhardt school.

Despite our disagreements, Merriman, Mrs. Merriman and I parted, as before, the best of friends. They loaded me not only with good wishes for my personal welfare, but also with baskets of peaches and other kinds of fruit for which my comrades in camp forgave me for being on friendly terms with a pro-Boer.

The middle of April to the middle of May we spent at Matjesfontein, a very primitive sort of watering-place in the high veldt of Cape Colony, brown and bare with stony hills around it. The air, however, was delicious and the nights cool. Our usual routine of camp life was somewhat varied by field-days, during which the men in my troop were much entertained by hearing our worthy lieutenant who never could get the right word of command and always shouted "left wheel" when he meant "right," and so forth, being "ticked off" by the colonel before us all for some exceptionally foolish bit of work.

"Of course," added the colonel consolingly, "it wouldn't really have mattered much—only you and the men with you would all have been killed."

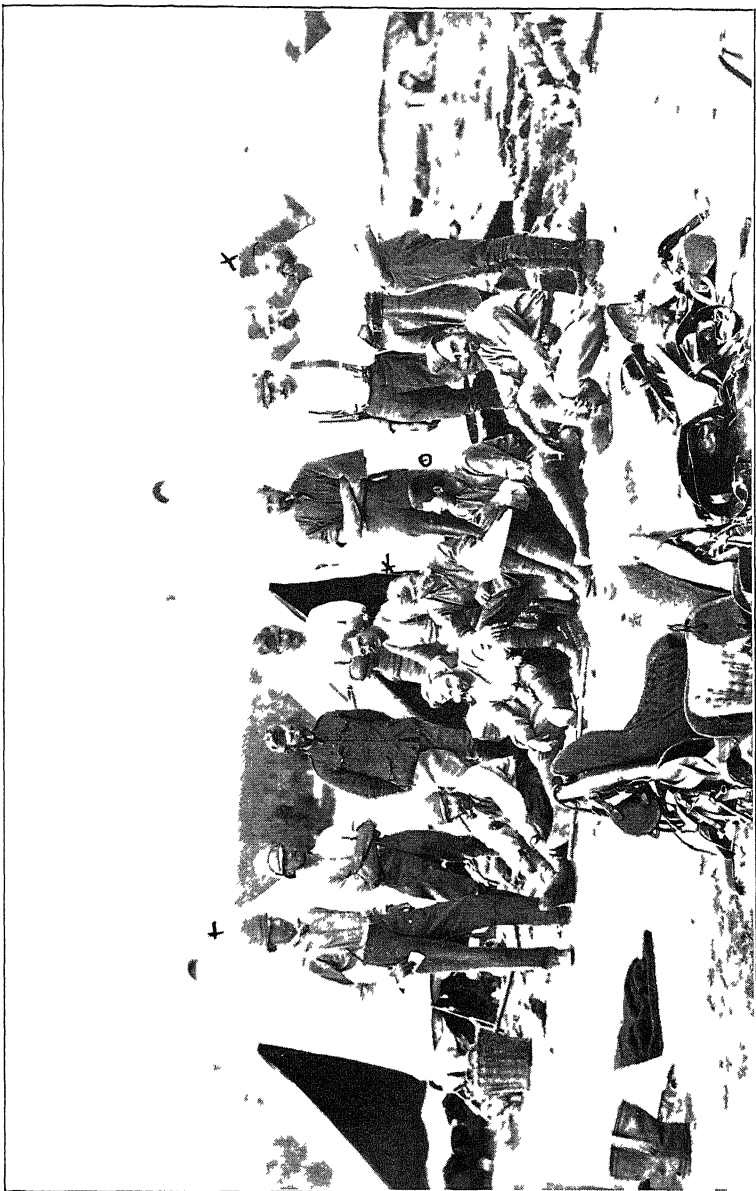
I was lucky enough at Matjesfontein to find two English friends, Harry Portman and his brother, staying in a little hotel where the latter, who was suffering from

consumption, had been sent for his health. They continued for me the Mount Nelson tradition of invitation for bath and supper, and I gratefully remember many good hot baths there, the last I was to enjoy for months.

Meanwhile I also grew to like camp life and to enjoy more and more the comradeship of my friends in the corps, especially those of my own "four"—Teddy Goschen, who with me became a signaller for our corps, the only military distinction I ever achieved, Eric Bonham and Inigo Thomas. I remember, of course, many others at that time, but especially Robert Michell, now H.M. Ambassador at Santiago, Chile, and R. Wodehouse, a friend of my brother Mowbray's, who was a sergeant in our corps and a splendid type of man.

Major Bryan Pellew, an Irish Catholic who commanded the Shropshire Yeomanry, which was brigaded with us as well as the Dublins commanded by Lord Longford, amused me one day by coming up to me and asking if I was a papist like him. When I said yes, he told me that our colonel, Colonel Spragge, had suggested to him that he should hold a service on Sunday for the Catholic soldiers at Matjesfontein, as there were not enough to justify a Catholic chaplain. He said that his answer was the Roman Catholic service was run on railway lines and required a proper mechanic to conduct it unlike the Protestant denominations, which were like carts and could be driven by any old kind of driver. So the matter ended there. It did not much affect me, however, for I had my little book with the prayers of the Mass which I could read to myself on Sundays.

One thing gave me great satisfaction: before leaving Maitland Camp I had managed to get rid of my lazy black cob and to get instead a smart-looking Argentine nag which I picked out of a lot just come from South America. He turned out very well, and we became great friends; in fact, the only real horse friend I ever had. I called him the "Cid" on account of his Spanish origin.



+ TPR. ERIC BONHAM.

* TPR. FRANK INIGO THOMAS.

© TPR. EDWARD H. GOSCHEN.

× TPR. ESME HOWARD.

TROOPERS, DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE'S OWN YEOMANRY, BOER WAR, 1900

After the end of our stay at Matjesfontein, which we left on May 13th for Springfontein in the Orange Free State, I was attacked by a tiresome illness with a good deal of pain, but not enough to be on the sick list. For some time the doctor could not make out what was the matter, but finally discovered it was a form of shingles, not, as generally, taking the form of an eruption round the waist, but following a nerve running down the right side of the neck and shoulder to the arm.

I was allowed off "fatigues" on account of this, but otherwise continued most of my ordinary duties.

We did not stop at Springfontein after all, but went on to Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State.

Travelling was very slow at this stage, since the railway culverts and bridges had in most cases been blown up by the retreating Boers, who were hurrying north before the pursuing forces of Roberts and French. It looked as if the war might be ended in a very short time, but from a letter of mine I see the rumour went about that Kitchener had said it might last another three years.

I wrote to Isa from Bloemfontein on May 18th :

" We arrived here at 4 a.m. on Wednesday after sixty hours of travelling, and in bitter cold we had to get out of our train and wait for orders because at Springfontein we had been simply told to go on to Bloemfontein. At 9 a.m. orders came to camp in the Imperial Yeomanry camp about two miles from this so-called town. I had to laugh when I thought how I should have cursed if, after a journey of sixty hours in Europe, I had had to leave the train at 4 a.m., wait for hours without any food, and finally march on foot for two miles leading two horses, and all this at a time in which I should have been considered an invalid at home. Truly the military life hardens us to many things."¹

¹ Translated from the Italian in which the letter was written.

I was not very favourably impressed with the town of Bloemfontein of that time : " houses of corrugated iron for the most part and a few pretentious stone buildings without merit."

On May 19th I wrote :

" I have just had my hair clipped by our sergeant-major with nice clippers such as they use for horses. He said he hoped I should not meet my wife for some weeks, and I told him I thought it would be better for him if I didn't. He is an old sergeant of the Life Guards and not a bad fellow when he is not ' official,' but when he roars at one on parade I should like to give him Schopenhauer's *Essay on Noise* to read."

I wonder what punishment I should have received for such a crime as that.

On May 20th we left Bloemfontein by rail for Sandriver Station, where, a bridge having lately been blown up, we detrained and continued on our horses to Kroonstadt, from which I wrote on the 25th that we were leaving immediately for Lindley, where we were due to join the column of General Colville, who was pressing northward.

From Sandriver to Kroonstadt we were haunted all along the line of march by the smell of rotting flesh. We followed the line of Roberts's march northward, and it was strewn with the carcasses of unburied horses that had died along the route.

From Kroonstadt I wrote on May 25th :

" Here we eat little, sleep less and toil much, but it seems that the life agrees with me. To-day I had my first bath for a fortnight in a river where the mud came up to my knees and where there were countless dead horses and oxen. Such are the delights of a soldier's life."¹

On May 29th I wrote a letter which I was never able

¹ Translated from the Italian.

to post till August 17th from Volksrust after my escape from the Boers. The following is a copy of this letter :

Near Lindley,
Orange Free State,
May 29th, 1900.

“ DEAREST ISA,

“ I am writing to you from a camp where we have been practically besieged for about three days. We left Kroonstadt and hurried by forced marches to join General Colville here. Unfortunately we arrived just too late to find him. We got into Lindley town at 2 p.m. and found he had left with his column at 7 the same morning of the 27th. We had been up three mornings running at 4 a.m. and started marching at sunrise on half rations, and the day we marched to Lindley we had only one biscuit served out in the morning, so we were hungry enough and tired when we got into the town. We had scarcely dismounted in the Market Square before word came that Boer scouts were on the hills near the town, so we mounted again and began to march out. Almost immediately they began firing upon us, and it was evident that we were caught in a nasty trap. We could see nobody and did not know where the bullets were coming from. After standing to be shot at for a little while we were galloped back to rejoin the colonel, who had remained behind, and then huddled up in the market square while bullets whizzed about. I was afraid the Boers would cut off our ammunition waggons which were some way outside, but they had not the wit to do this, and the colonel retreated us cleverly with very slight loss and took up a strong position about three miles out of the town. Here we have been waiting for reinforcements ever since, with bullets constantly whizzing over our heads. So you are now getting the first letter I have ever written under fire. Our troop is posted on a kopje which guards our camp and is absolutely essential. So far we have kept it well, but yesterday we had two

killed, our Captain Keith, and one other, a Corporal Galpin by name, a very good fellow. I had had a little bite of food with him just before, and he wished me good-bye as I had to cross an open space that was regularly exposed to bullets and get back to my position. However, I got through all right, and he, poor fellow, was shot shortly after.

"We have now been two days on this kopje, but to-day the firing has been much less, as the Irish companies¹ have been doing good work clearing out the Boers from their position, and I think a large number have moved away towards the north to oppose General Colville.

"Our rations are very short indeed. We have no biscuit left and live on boiled mutton, having caught a lot of sheep from the neighbouring farms—but how we are to get on I don't know. I suppose we shall soon find out.

* * * * *

"We are very tired for fighting all day and doing sentry and fatigue most of the night, especially during the bitter cold nights we have, is not restful.

"May 30th. Here we are still. Teddy Goschen and I are perched like eagles on our kopje with a signalling flag to send any messages that may be useful to the colonel, who is in the camp on the crest of a rise on the other side of the valley.

"The Boers occupy a long line of hills all round us, but fortunately at a range too far to do us much harm beyond the worry of their shots flying over. Also one or two small farm-houses over which, by the way, the white flag has been flying ever since we came, but which has not prevented them from using this as a shelter and doing most of their execution therefrom. To-day the fire has been much less, and we have only had one man wounded² so far as I know.

¹ Belfast and Dublin Yeomanry, with whom we were brigaded.

² In our troop of twenty-five men.

"We are waiting for an answer to the messages sent to Colville and to Rundle in the south and to Kroonstadt before moving away. I hope at any rate that some of these messages have got through. I am glad to say that one of the Irish companies stormed a farm with the white flag yesterday and turned out fifteen (armed) Boers and killed them. We also found a lot of expanding bullets on one prisoner. I fear the many charges made against them are not wholly unfounded.

"If we do not get any reply to our messages I suppose we shall retire on Kroonstadt, and I hope soon, for we are getting very bored with sitting upon this kopje with nothing to eat. Papa's field-glasses are excellent. Teddy and I were able to locate the position of some snipers about 2,000 yards off, and soon shifted them out of it. I have written you a regular Tommy Atkins letter, and I am beginning to feel like one. So far as I can judge, war is not an ennobling *métier*. It makes one think more of one's food than I ever did before, and at the present time I have an insatiable craving for fresh eggs *à la coque* and a large cup of hot coffee and some thick slices of bread and butter. We have had no bread or biscuits now for two days, and one feels the want of it greatly."

Our Boer captors were most generous in not taking from us any money, but generally and naturally took away letters and papers they found on us. This letter however I found lying on the kopje after our capture.

There is a postscript dated :

"Volksrust,

"August 17th, 1900.

"I send this document just as I wrote it on the kopje the day before we were taken. It will amuse you. My other letter will tell you about our escape."

¹ These were a pair of Zeiss glasses sent me by my father-in-law before I left England.

What happened to me after this letter was written was, shortly, as follows :

That night another trooper and I were ordered to scout out beyond the kopjes towards the Boer positions. The night was fairly dark, though clear, and we made a big circle round the eastern side of our kopjes. We heard no sound for three or four hours, till finally, some hours before sunrise, we heard an ominous rumbling from the direction of the Boer laager. My companion said to me : " Unless I am mistaken, that is not a noise made by ordinary wagons but by artillery." We went back and reported this. It was indeed artillery, of which we had none. The Boers had brought up four guns, if I remember aright. The rest of the night we all spent feverishly trying to strengthen our little schanz, which had been prepared only to protect us from rifle bullets. We rolled up heavy stones to make a kind of wall and dug out the rocky ground behind with the two picks and shovels belonging to our troop of twenty-five men. By daylight the Boers began to bombard our position. At first they went for the Irish companies on a ridge about a mile away from us. Then they turned their attention to the two kopjes occupied by the D.C.O., with ever-increasing effect. Shells only came about once every ten minutes, and though at first they seemed innocuous, the noise they made, first the boom of the cannon shot, then the shriek of the shell two or three seconds after, and finally the terrific—or so it seemed to me—explosion generally on the kopje a few yards behind our position, at last began to tell on my nerves, and perhaps on those of the others, especially as we could make no reply except with our one poor maxim, which was up on the colonel's hill.

Once, after pounding away for some time and doing no harm, a shell struck the rock just below where we were lying, and the force of the concussion knocked down about half of the wall of our schanz amid a tremendous cloud of splinters of stone and dust. Then our officer asked, " Anyone hurt ? " and out of the rubble of the

destroyed wall faces began to lift up that had so scared an expression that it was impossible to help laughing. No one, fortunately, had been hurt, but most of our protecting wall was knocked down. All those whose part of the schanz had been destroyed were told to go and look for protection at the back of the kopje. About half a dozen, among whom I was, having still the protection of the wall, stayed where we were and began to dislike the boom, shriek, bang of the shells more than ever. After a bit the Boer gunmen left us more or less alone and turned all their attention to the front kopje on which most of our D.C.O. men were placed. Here the bombardment grew really hot, and after some time all their poor defences must have been blown to smithereens, for the officer who had succeeded poor Captain Keith, who was killed on the second day, ordered his men on the front kopje to retreat to the wagon camp in a valley between our position and the colonel's, where the horses were picketed and the ammunition wagons, etc., were kept. We saw them clamber down the steep sides of the kopje and then, under sharp fire, make for the comparative shelter of the camp. I am sorry to say that Teddy Goschen and I could not restrain our laughter at seeing our good sergeant-major, purple in the face and all dignity thrown aside, legging it like a marathon runner; but our turn was to come soon.

Lying where we were—there was but a half-dozen of us left now behind the schanz—we could see Boers suddenly swarm over the top of the kopje in front of us. Two D.C.O. men left behind by the others, not knowing what to do, suddenly put up a white flag, instead of just making "hands up" as they should have done in sign of surrender. We shouted at them to take the rag down, but in the din of the firing they probably never heard, and were very soon swamped by the oncoming tide of Boers. Then our officer, much perplexed as to what to do, gave orders for his troop to retire to our camp in the valley at the back. With the Boers firing

at us at a range of not more than 150 or 200 yards, we did so, but we lost not more than three men, I believe, one killed and two wounded. One of the latter fell at my side as we were climbing down the kopje. He fell like a stone, crying, "My God, I'm hit! I can't go on." I asked if he wanted help, but he said he couldn't move and would wait for the Boers to come up, so I went on down. I don't know how so many of us got through untouched, but suppose that the Boers were out of breath and unsteady after climbing two kopjes. Once in the valley, we sheltered behind a small farm-house and behind the banks of a little spruit, firing at the Boers on the kopje, which they returned in a desultory way, much to the wrath of the Boer farmer and his wife in the house.

Meanwhile, all the shell-fire was concentrated on the colonel's camp on the edge of the far side of the valley, and was evidently causing a good deal of trouble there. Finally we saw the white flag go up over that camp, from which our officer judged that we were at liberty to follow suit, and he gave me the order to go out in front of the farm waving the flag. The Boers on the kopje almost instantly stopped firing at our men in the valley and came running down to meet us, telling us to put our hands up, which we did. They searched us and took our arms and field-glasses, which they were most eager to get. So far as I know, they took no money from anyone. I had about twelve pounds sterling in gold and notes in my pockets, but they never touched a penny. They let us collect our goods and chattels, coats, rugs, mess-tins, etc., but this was not an easy job, as much had been left on the kopjes where we spent the night. However, we were given leave to go up the kopjes again under guard to collect what we could.

I was particularly anxious to find my haversack, which had in it a little map of the country, one or two letters, including the one above quoted at length, and particularly I wanted a little gold chain which I generally wore round my neck with a gold locket attached containing a miniature

of my mother and a small gold crucifix and medal of Our Lady. I found the haversack and the map and letters, but not the chain and medals. I also found my coat and rug, which I was glad of, for the nights were very cold, often some degrees below freezing. The wounded had already been taken off to hospital and the dead removed.

It must have been about 2 o'clock p.m. when we surrendered. Our horses and wagons were, of course, taken and we were all marched off north-eastwards through the town of Lindley as soon as we had been mustered and a roll-call taken of those who survived. No great difference was made between officers and men prisoners so far as I remember. All were expected to march on foot. In Lindley town we were allowed to buy such provisions as we could obtain, bread and tinned stuff, etc., and then were hurried off on the road to Reitz, as the Boers evidently feared an attempt to retake us.

There were two wagons with us which carried our cloaks and rugs, etc. By nightfall we were famished, having had neither bite nor sup for nearly twenty-four hours, most of which I had spent either scouting or helping to build the schanz at night; or, during the day, in being shot at with shells or bullets, ending with the rather nerve-racking experience of being made prisoner. We made a camp, which merely meant wrapping ourselves in our rugs on the ground, eating such food as we got in Lindley, and swallowing a cup of hot, black coffee which the Boers served out to us, after which we slept the sleep, if not of the just, at least of the tired-out. Before sunrise a cup of coffee and we were off, filing, a long and sorry-looking crowd, over the barren veld. About midday we came to a spruit with a little water in it. Here we halted, one or two oxen were killed, and we cut off gobbets of meat to cook in our own mess-tins and cooked some doughnuts in water-pails, which I, remembering the cuisine of the Australian prospectors, was fairly good at. After our meal I went down to the spruit again to fill my water-bottle, when suddenly I heard firing away to the west.

There was nothing to be seen. The Boer who was guarding the men at the spruit looked up at us with a smile: "Bloody pom-pom," he said; "you'll have to clear out of this in double-quick time." Then we knew that there was a column coming after us and had great hopes of release, but for some reason or other the column never came on. We learnt after that it had arrived at Lindley the very evening of our surrender.

But now occurred the breaking-up of the Boer commando that was guarding us. There must have been perhaps two hundred men. In less than half an hour they had saddled, put their worldly belongings on to the saddle, and with rifle slung over their shoulders were off and away, scattering in all directions in small bands by dozens or scores to the east, north and south, but not to the west where the British were advancing ponderously.

All the Boers carried with them besides their rifles was a rug, a bag of flour and another of coffee, a packet of strips of biltong (dried meat), hung from the saddle and, of course, a bandolier full of cartridges. It was marvellous to see these men gallop off and fade away out of sight in less than an hour after we had heard the first pom-poms. I rubbed my eyes and asked myself how we British, trudging back and forth over the veld, could ever deal with them. Well, it took us about three years more to do it. We are, certainly in military matters, a race not quick in the uptake. The best account given of the later phases of the Boer War which were so baffling to our generals is unquestionably that given in D. Reitz's most interesting work, *Commando*, which will make much clear to such Englishmen as are still interested in those old, forgotten far-off things.

So we, with only about twoscore Boer guards, went slowly trudging over the veld day by day, heading to the north-east. The first so-called town we stopped at was Reitz. Here we were allowed a halt of two days to recoup. There was a spruit where we could get the first wash we had had since Kroonstad on May 25th. I have

a letter written by me from Reitz, dated June 4th (sent "by favour of the Free State Commandant," who was particularly kindly), stating I was well and kindly treated.

That night arrangements had been made for most of our men to sleep in the school-house, but Teddy Goschen and I went exploring the little place, got back late, and could not find a corner to doss down in. As we were wandering disconsolately about the main street a young Boer came up and asked us where we were going to sleep. We said sadly that we had no place.

"Oh," he said, "my uncle keeps a sort of pub here and will fix you up all right. Will you come along?"

"Of course," we replied, "and with best thanks, but you will have to get leave from your commandant and our colonel first."

"Oh," said he, "we'll do that without trouble. Get your kit and we'll go along at once."

So it was all settled. We got a very clean, comfortable room with two good beds, had an excellent hot supper, and, after supper, music. One of the guests was a young Boer officer who had been one of our captors at Lindley. We discussed the whole affair. He criticised, I think, the conduct of it by our officers very severely, and said that if we had moved off those kopjes, to which we were glued, any time during the first two days we could have got back to Kroonstad without difficulty. Well—perhaps—. After supper he played a concertina, and we all sang the usual English camp-songs together, and the Boers sang some Dutch songs, including the Free State Anthem. Then he said :

"We must have 'God Save the Queen,' too, in honour of our English guests."

So we all sang "God Save the Queen" with a will until our host, who was somewhere in the back of the house, came in hurriedly and said :

"Look here ! I don't mind your singing that, but if some 'bitter Boer' outside hears you shouting 'send her victorious' and all that stuff I may get into trouble."

Teddy and I quite agreed that this would be very unfortunate and our concert came to an end. Surely such an incident could scarcely have happened in any war before.

Another significant incident, giving a pleasant insight into the friendliness of our Boer captors, was as follows:

The second day at Reitz we were all mustered by the colonel. He said the commandant had had various little things handed to him by the Boers who had taken the kopjes at Lindley which they believed were probably keepsakes and which they wished to return to their owners. He held up these various objects—prayer books, photographs, etc.—which were claimed by one or other of our men. Finally, to my surprise, he held up also my gold chain and locket, with my mother's miniature, and the little gold crucifix and medal of Our Lady which I had long given up as completely lost. This naturally made a great impression on me, as did our treatment by the Boers all through, and since that date I have never been willing to hear any abuse of Boers, for whom I had from the first a genuine respect, but for whom from that time I have always felt a real affection as a people. If there were "bitter Boers" that was not unnatural, but I believe that Boers and English are destined to understand each other in South Africa and to form, with God's help, one great and friendly people in the future. A small incident from which to deduce such great developments? Perhaps—but years are made up of minutes, and miles of inches.

Teddy and I parted from our hosts in Reitz and our captor of Lindley with real gratitude, and were sorry that in the ordinary course of life we should hardly be likely to meet again.

After Reitz I began to feel feverish and ill, and before reaching Vrede, in the extreme north-east corner of the Free State I felt too ill to be able to march and was, therefore, allowed to lie on the kit-bags of the battalion which were carried on a mule-cart. Mine had fallen off two or three days before, and Inigo Thomas, who was in

a similar plight, shared an old potato sack as our only covering during the bitterly cold, frosty nights of the high veldt. I put down my illness partly to this and partly to drinking water from a spruit in which I found a decaying ox only a few yards away. Whatever the cause was, when I reached Vrede I had high fever, a splitting headache, and pains in my limbs.

It was, therefore, decided to leave me behind in that typical little Boer market-town under the care of the Irish doctor, Mulock Bentley by name, and in charge of an English family, the Bayfords, who had a good, clean spare room, and used also to keep a sort of little table d'hôte for a few Englishmen who had remained on in spite of the war. Mr. Bayford was a carpenter by trade, Mrs. Bayford kept house assisted by a grown-up daughter, but she had also acted as nurse in one of the Free State hospitals and was, therefore, as well fitted as anyone in the place to take charge of a serious case. Herbert Mappin, a partner in Mappin and Webb, who was down with a bad attack of jaundice, shared the room with me. The colonels and my special friends in the Corps, Sergeant Wodehouse, Teddy Goschen, Inigo Thomas and Eric Bonham came to bid me good-bye, but I was too ill to realise what was happening to me.

Dr. Bentley very soon diagnosed my case as enteric. He was kindness itself, and even cashed Mappin's and my cheques for us, enabling us thus to pay the Bayfords and buy any medicines and comforts we required.

This also must have been an unusual happening in war time. Two troopers, prisoners, down with serious sickness, allowed by the enemy commander to be taken in by a compatriot, finding a fellow British subject in the enemy doctor who had such confidence in them that, though communication with England was naturally cut off, he changed their cheques written out on blank paper on London banks, which cheques I am glad to say were all subsequently presented and duly honoured. Was there ever a war like this before or since?

When Colonels Spragge and Holland had departed and

my friends had said good-bye, Teddy Goschen's smile being the greatest encouragement of that moment, I turned my face to the wall feeling quite uninterested in life or death, but only thanking the Lord that I could now rest in a warm bed instead of being jolted in the mule-cart over roads that seemed like chains of Alps which wracked every nerve in my body. For some days more I remember nothing.

CHAPTER XVI

ESCAPE FROM VREDE AND RETURN TO ENGLAND

(1900)

DR. BENTLEY was an excellent doctor and Mrs. Bayford a competent and excellent nurse, and I have little doubt that I owe my life to them. To Herbert Mappin, too, my room mate, I owe a great debt of gratitude, for as soon as he recovered from his attack of jaundice he helped to look after me, and his cheery companionship did the rest. The fever subsided on the eleventh day, and in three weeks I was practically convalescent. I had been inoculated against enteric fever on the journey out, and the doctor believed that this had probably mitigated the severity of the attack. As soon as I was well enough to sit up I asked to lie out on the stoep in the sun, and many a Vrede burgher riding to and from Commando would stop and ask after my health, and now and then give news of the world outside. Such news was naturally always favourable to the Boer side, but most admitted that they were heartily tired of the war and hoped for an early ending, in which I entirely agreed.

Soon I was well enough to join Mrs. Bayford's table d'hôte, which consisted, besides the Bayford family, Mappin and myself, of Mr. Symonds, the English tailor of Vrede, Archbold, a Scottish bank clerk, who was in charge of a branch of one of the Cape banks, and one or two others who had remained marooned in Vrede on the outbreak of war and intended to stay on quietly till the end if permitted to do so by the Landrost, Mr. Bornemann. Conversation at these meals was not on a specially high level. Indeed, I found camp fire discussion with the Australian prospectors much more stimulating. The

company usually discussed the news of the day which was invariably of some British defeat obtained from Boer sources, and then inveighed against the folly of the Boers for not coming to a reasonable settlement, and also against the ineptitude of the British commanders for not being able to enforce one. But small daily affairs of life in that complete backwater, and anxieties as to the future, especially as to the fate of all those at the table when "the British came to Vrede," constituted the principal part of the conversational bill of fare. There was also a good deal of amiable chaff generally at the expense of little Symonds the tailor. The latter had just before the war bought a smart pair of blue roan horses for his Cape cart. These were the apple of his eye, and the Landrost had long ago threatened to commandeer them, so that Symonds lived in a state of continual nervousness about his horses, and any mention of them, coupled with the name of the Landrost, was sure to produce an explosion to the delight of the company.

"Born man does he call himself? Well, born fool I call him, and I don't care if he hears it."

He no doubt did hear of it, for one fine morning two armed Boers arrived and carried off the two blue roans. Symonds's indignation knew no bounds, but he never got them back.

In the afternoon Mappin and I were allowed to go for walks in the company of the Doctor and Mr. Bayford, who guaranteed our not escaping. So little by little our captivity was relaxed until it became little more than nominal. We increased the distance of these daily walks, even to two or three miles out of the town, so as to be fit for a longer journey if the occasion should offer for an escape without compromising our friends, and also in order to make ourselves acquainted with all the roads leading out of Vrede. By "roads" must be understood merely cart-tracks, sometimes fifty yards wide, with side roads quite as wide branching off to distant farms. This made it very difficult to tell whether one was following a main road or a local one. Mappin and I had often

spoken to the Doctor of the advisability of attempting an escape but he dissuaded us. Finally, however, the Landrost took a step that forced the decision upon us. It appeared that he was much afraid of our being recaptured by British troops, which were slowly closing in on Vrede, lest we should give information about people and things in the district. We heard we were to be put under more strict control and might even be transferred to the town prison, a prospect which did not commend itself to us. Among the other Boers we met we had scraped acquaintance with a captain of Transvaal Scouts named Brazell who spoke good English. He told us he wanted to surrender, being sick of the war and tired of the way the Boers now always ran away when attacked (though this was indeed their best way of carrying on the war). He asked us one day whether, if he helped us to escape by getting us horses and taking us over into the British lines, we would try to make things rather easier for him with the British authorities.

We naturally said we would do what we could, but we could not promise our efforts would be successful. This, however, satisfied him, and we entered into a little plot for our escape, the Doctor acting as go-between. Brazell was a very plucky and determined fellow, always smartly dressed in khaki and always well shaven, quite unlike the ordinary untidy, dirty-looking Boer on commando. We were told he had been used to carrying messages between President Steyn and Kruger. Brazell used to visit the house after dark by the back door and so we arranged our plans together.

We settled to leave Vrede on Friday, August 10th, at night, and that morning Brazell went out to commandeer from some neighbouring farmer the horses that were to serve us on our flight. That very day, however, the Landrost, who must have smelt a rat, sent round word to Mappin and me bidding us to give our parole. This we refused to do, and he then put a guard of several sentries round the house which made our escape impossible that night. The next day a message came from the

Landrost saying that we were to be ready to leave Vrede in an hour for Frankfurt and there report to General Olivier's commando with which it appeared we were to be dragged about, a fate which, as the Doctor whom we called in for consultation warned us, would almost certainly bring on a serious and probably fatal relapse for both of us. Brazell came in while we were in a state of uncertainty as to what we should do and feeling very miserable, for uncertainty is surely the most unhappy plight when action is needed. He was a man of action and settled all for us in a trice.

"Go out on to the stoep," said he, "and let the sentry see you and so be sure you are still in the house. I'll go and talk to the sentry and offer him a drink. When you see his back turned make the best of your way out of the house at the back to Mr. ——'s stables, and I'll bring you the horses there."

It was a big risk, but the decision was made and acted on at once. We showed ourselves on the stoep and saw Brazell talking to the sentry. As soon as the latter's back was turned we went in again, and without stopping to take any of our goods and chattels, and without even saying good-bye to anyone except Mrs. Bayford, who stood overcome with excitement in the little passage by which we passed out at the back. Fortunately a furious wind was raging, making a storm of red dust about as thick as a London fog. All good burghers were in their houses and no one saw us climb the low fence that separated the Bayford's yard from the stables behind. In there we took refuge, hiding ourselves as best we could, Mappin under some hay near the wall, and I on a pile of straw about eight or ten feet high, from which I could see the door which we carefully closed. It was almost dark in the stables, and outside the storm continued to howl in unabated fury. So we waited for what seemed an interminable time for Brazell to come. After perhaps an hour or more we heard the door open and a light whistle. Mappin's head, rising out of the hay, in the dark stable, looked like some picture by Ostade or Teniers,

and his expression of anxiety with wide-open eyes made me laugh and forget my own fears in that tense moment, even before I heard Brazell's voice, asking : " Are you there ? " Then we came out and he ordered quickly, " Follow me—they are just going to search the house." The dust storm fortunately still kept all in their houses as we hurried down one street and up another till we reached the Wesleyan chapel. Here he almost pushed us in, saying he would come again for us after nightfall. We hid ourselves in a sort of little dark closet and waited. After some time we heard steps and a voice : " Where are you ? " but we made no sign. Then the voice said : " It's all right. I'm the minister and I'll show you the safest place to hide." We thought it was better to trust the voice and did so. The kind minister told us the burghers were searching houses in that street for us. Having been warned by Brazell where we were, he would show us a place which the burghers, even if they searched the chapel, would never think of. He opened a sort of trap-door under the pulpit and put us into a hollow space between the pulpit and the floor, saying he would return and bring us something to eat and drink. Presently he came back and left us half a loaf and a bottle of lemonade, which latter we could not open, so that, with throats dried up with the dust and wind we suffered the tortures of Tantalus. He, good man, was evidently greatly alarmed at the part in our adventure he had been called on to play against his will. We sat huddled up in a very cramped position in our modern " priests' hole." Presently the door of the chapel opened and we heard footsteps come in. We sat like mice. The burghers made a perfunctory examination of the premises, being assured by one who was apparently the minister's servant and had not seen us in the chapel that we were not there. The minister himself had no doubt betaken himself off to avoid telling a lie, for we saw him no more. Soon the heavy boots ceased tramping round the chapel, the voices were silent, the door closed, we were again alone. Not long after, to our infinite relief, we heard Brazell's whistle and came out.

"Quick," he said, "follow me. I've got a place for you for the night."

We followed him without speaking. I felt I had never spent a more profitable time under any pulpit or one during which there was less fear of disgracing myself by sleep. It was dark now and silently we followed Brazell through the quiet streets till we came to a little house, the door of which he unlocked and we went in.

"You will be all right here," he said in a whisper. "This is a '*Nachtmahl*'¹ house belonging to a burgher whom I had to arrest and bring to prison a day or two ago for shirking his turn in commando. Very good that he should give you hospitality without knowing it," and he chuckled over the humour of the situation.

That night we spent peacefully in the house as armed burghers were posted round the town to intercept us in case we tried to escape. Our English friends brought food and drink under cover of darkness, Bayford, Archbold and Symonds all running considerable risk in order to bring us anything they thought we wanted. It is impossible to think without emotion of the kindness of all these acquaintances of the Bayford table d'hôte. All next day we lay low in the house in semi darkness with the shutters shut and never dared speak above a whisper.

The following night before the moon rose Brazell came, told us that the burghers were tired of doing sentry round the town, and that the coast was clear. So we followed him out of the house and through the little town, which was not lighted. We met several parties of burghers, but as we were in civilian clothes, which we had bought at one of the Vrede stores some time before, no one suspected us. Nevertheless, we breathed more freely once we were out of the streets. Brazell took us

¹ Most of the farmers round market towns in South Africa owned a *Nachtmahl* or Communion house in town, to which they came with their families four times a year when their Communion was celebrated. These were also occasions for mild festivities among the younger people. Such houses were very sparsely furnished, and are left quite empty during the rest of the year. At Vrede there was a whole quarter of the empty *Nachtmahl* houses, so that our presence in one was unlikely to be observed.

to a spruit about half a mile out of the town and told us to lie there hiding under the bank until he came again with horses. In about half an hour he galloped up, riding bareback on one horse, which he bade us hold and wait till he brought the others, saying he might not be able to join us again until the whole town was asleep. He very considerably brought us greatcoats and blankets (mine was bright red and green, I still have it), for the night was bitter and freezing and the wind was still blowing half a gale. We never saw him again. We waited for him for five hours till 2 a.m., holding on to the horse and trying to keep it quiet. One by one we saw the lights of the houses go out and all sounds of life in the town ceased except the occasional barking of a dog. The moon rose about nine o'clock and with the brightness of a South African moon painted the landscape all round in silver and deep black. We hardly dared to speak but our teeth chattered loudly with the cold. It was one of the worst nights I ever spent.

At last about 2 a.m. we decided we could not risk being found near the town after sunrise, and we reckoned we had only about three and a half hours more before daylight. We let the horse go as he would only have been an encumbrance, and struggling against a head wind, carrying our rugs and few belongings, a loaf of bread and a cold chicken that Mrs. Bayford had sent us, started on our forty-five mile trek over the veld to Voksrust, which was the nearest point we knew to be in the hands of the English. We had to go a considerable way round the town, which we kept at a respectful distance, before we got on to the Volksrust road, which we knew from having carefully taken its bearings during our daily walks with the Doctor. We believed we covered about eight miles before sun up. Before dawn we went some way off the road and hid in a spruit, laid our rugs out and slept. We were awakened by galloping hoofs coming towards us and, to our horror, saw a party of eight armed Boers, cantering in single file, cross the spruit not more than a hundred yards away. Their passage over

the spruit seemed to take an eternity, for we were in full view of them, my red and green rug being particularly conspicuous, but not one looked our way and we breathed again. We found that the road which we thought in the darkness we had left a good quarter of a mile or more away had made a sharp bend towards our supposed hiding place and this nearly undid us. We moved farther from it up the spruit, breakfasted off part of our loaf and chicken and spruit water and slept soundly till late in the afternoon.

As soon as it was dark we started again, intending to reach before long the store of an Englishman named Jack which we knew was situated by a ford where the Volksrust road crossed a river some fifteen or so miles out of Vrede. We reckoned we had only seven or eight miles to go and were sure that if we could but reach Jack's store we should get a friendly welcome and food to carry us on our way. In the dark, however, we got off the main road and wandered along a track leading to a farm about two miles or more away. When we came near the farm the dogs began barking and were set on to us. We retreated hastily, and having refreshed ourselves from a small tin of "emergency rations" which I had had the forethought to carry with me, found the main road again. By this time the moon was up and it was easier to distinguish the main track. About 10.30 p.m., after walking over four hours, we reached Jack's store, which we easily recognised by its position near the ford over a running stream. Jack, whom we had met at Vrede at the Bayfords, was delighted to see us and greatly amused at our adventures. He behaved like a good Samaritan, gave up to us the two beds in the house and prepared us a most welcome supper of hot coffee and bread and butter. Next morning before dawn he took us up to his stable loft for safety in case any Boers passed that way, and brought up food, drink and books. Sure enough, a party of armed Boers came and off saddled about a quarter of a mile away. They came to the house but never searched the loft and we were left in such peace

that I was able to read Crockett's *Raiders*, and have retained a very lively memory of that excellent novel in consequence. The next night, after a good meal, our friend Jack gave us a cold chicken, a loaf of bread and a small flask of whisky which, as whisky was unobtainable in the Free State at that time, was a particularly generous action. Our host also accompanied us some way on our road since, the moon not having risen, it would have been easy for us to miss our way again. In fact there was nothing that this most hospitable of men did not do for us, not only putting himself to every kind of inconvenience, but also risking his skin and his little property for our sakes. The way in which men whom we hardly knew and were never likely to see again behaved to us is something I still marvel over and can never forget.

When the moon rose he gave us final instructions as to our route and we parted feeling we were saying good-bye to a real friend whom we seemed to have known intimately for years. I have often wished to meet him again—but have never heard of him from that night when we parted in the high veldt in the clear light of the South African moon.

One curious little incident that occurred during our supper with Jack before leaving his store must still be mentioned. Suddenly, unexpectedly, I felt the sharp claws of some animal digging into the calf of my leg through my trousers. I looked down and saw Jack's cat striking hard at my leg. I drove it off and putting my hand down to the spot found a mouse which had sought refuge there from the pursuing cat. We all laughed heartily, but I would not allow the fugitive which had sought sanctuary with me to be given up to the pursuer. So it was later turned out on the veldt, because Jack protested that if I did not mind mice in my trousers he objected to them under his roof, while I argued that I was only doing for it what he was doing for us.

This third and last night of our tramp for liberty, August 14th-15th, we started at 8 p.m. and never stopped

except for half an hour until 6 a.m. We got completely off the road and at last after some consultation decided not to trouble any further about it but simply to take our line by the stars going in the direction of Volksrust. We had a long and weary tramp over the veld, during which Mappin and I were often in doubt as to our direction. This led to somewhat heated discussion, but about 4 a.m. we reached a stream which we knew must be the Klip River, the boundary between the Free State and the Transvaal. Here we got a Kaffir out of his hut from a kraal by the ford to show the "drift" (ford) and the road to Volksrust. We paid him well, but my disgust was great when I found that the rascal had gone off with the remains of our chicken and bread, to which we looked forward to restore us after our long night's journey. I am afraid I vented my wrath on poor Herbert Mappin, who had given the Kaffir our food as well as other things to carry and had forgotten to reclaim them. Our nerves were worn to a frazzle and high words passed between us. For some time we trudged along in gloomy silence like Alan Breck and David Balfour in *Kidnapped*.

At dawn, dog tired and very hungry, we went some distance off the road and, lying down in the long dry grass, slept like logs till midday. We thought that we could not be much more than fifteen miles from Volksrust, and many empty bottles of beer and even of Jamaica rum confirmed us in the belief that British patrols were not far off. So we decided to risk going out by day and started again along the road for the last lap, feeling, however, that we must have something to eat if we were to cover the distance before us by nightfall.

A mile or two further on we saw a nice looking Boer farm and decided we would go there and ask for some food. But we also felt we must tell some plausible story, as beggars generally do, to account for ourselves, our appearance and our wanderings alone over the veld in war time which might seem suspicious. So we agreed that I was to be a German and Herbert Mappin an Irishman who had both been fighting for the Boers of

the Vrede district and were tired of the war and going to make "hands up" to the British at Volksrust.

We went boldly up to the door of the farm and when the good dame of the house appeared told our sad tale, or rather I did, in the best Afrikaan's dialect I could mustre. She at once took pity on us, sat us down to a table in the courtyard and began preparing a meal, the smell of which, coming from the kitchen, filled us with hope. Presently, however, her husband, a fine upstanding farmer with a great brown beard came along and began to question me—a most unpleasant cross examination. Finally, not being altogether satisfied, which I could well understand, he said :

"Well, you say your friend is an Irishman?" I assented. "He therefore speaks English?" I assented again. "Well, now, that's lucky, for I have here an Irish friend who has worked on the farm for years but knows enough English to be able to talk to your friend. That will be nice for him."

When I translated this to Mappin his face did not show that joy at the prospect of meeting a compatriot which it should have done, and I felt that if I had reproached him for leaving that half-chicken with the Kaffir, he was inwardly cursing me for having led him into this quandary. Meanwhile, Mevrow's savoury mess steamed more and more from the kitchen when our host left to fetch his Irishman. I begged Mappin to forget about that chicken and to play the game. He reassured me, but said

"What the devil am I to say if he talks about Ireland? I've never been there."

I answered dejectedly that I hadn't the ghost of an idea but he must try to do his best.

Presently our host *malgré lui* arrived with a great burly fellow with a fine black beard.

"Which of you is the Irishman?" he asked with a good brogue.

"I am," said Mappin, with an altogether unmistakable English accent.

"What part of Ireland do you come from?"

A slight hesitation and then: "Wicklow."

"What town in Wicklow?"

A longer hesitation and then: "Wicklow"—then a bright thought—"I was born there but my parents came over to England when I was a child."

This was brilliant and I blessed Mappin's genius for invention.

"Oh, indeed," somewhat coldly from the man with the black beard, "and why did you come here?"

Mappin explained our story, which was listened to in gloomy silence. Finally the last question: "What's your name?"

Without hesitation and with absolutely convincing assurance, Mappin, looking him straight in the face, declared "Patrick O'Donnell."

"Well," said he with the black beard, "that's a fine Irish name any how, give me your hand on that. Now tell me how I can help you."

So he was told that we wanted to make "hands up" to the nearest British troops.

"Is that all," said the Irishman, "it's easily done. There's a British patrol right up on that kopje and I'll take you straight up to them if you like."

We accepted with enthusiasm, and he was preparing to carry us off there and then, but the good Mevrow insisted on our having our food first, to which, famished as we were, we readily agreed. So there in the courtyard under an acacia tree, with chickens and skinny pigs that were too friendly, and dogs that were suspicious and sniffy, and our Boer host and his Irish friend watching us, we ate up Mevrow's savoury mess as the pigs themselves would have done. At last the Irishman said:

"We'd best be off or we may miss them."

So we put some bread in our pockets to leave nothing to chance, and thanking most effusively our Boer hosts, we followed black-beard to the kopje. At the bottom he said:

"You're dog tired, I'll go up to the patrol and tell them you're here waiting for them."

So we sat on the boulders at the foot of the kopje and waited. Presently we saw an untidy looking lot of men with nondescript uniforms, slouch hats and every appearance of Boers on commando coming slowly down towards us. We thought we were betrayed into the hands of the enemy just as it seemed that we were safe at last.

It was not till they came right up to us and called out to us in good Queen's English that we knew that our Irishman had not deceived us. We had fallen in with a patrol of Bethune's mounted infantry. Then began all sorts of explanations. We told our story to the sergeant in charge, who was much amused at our appearance and ordered us to mount bareback on the led horses and to follow with his men to Sandspruit, where their camp was. We put our rugs on the horses, and after a cordial farewell to our Irish friend cantered away with the Bethunes to liberty and military discipline. The first taste of the latter was not sweet. The commandant of the camp at Sandspruit must have got out of bed on the wrong side that morning, for when the Bethune officer, a very good fellow, brought us to him to report he received us sourly, evidently disbelieved our story, and said he had no room in any of his tents for two more men, and that the Bethunes must look after us. The Bethune commander, however, also declared that he had not a hole or corner available for us and sent us back to the commandant, who then began to curse and to swear, saying that if Bethunes couldn't look after these two fellows they had found they would have to sleep out on the veld. The Bethune officer apologised to us for this unfortunate reception, and was at a loss to know what to do for us, when three members of the sergeant's mess of the South Lancashire Regiment most kindly took us into their tent and treated us with the best of all they had, giving us, I fear, even more tots of rum than were quite good for us. They made up excellent beds with rugs in their mess tents where, wearied out, we fell into a profound sleep which lasted till morning. When we went out after breakfast we were the laughing stock of the whole camp. Filthy and

unkempt and unshaven, with ragged clothes and old slouch hats that we had got at Vrede to look like Boers just off commando, the remarks passed by Tommy Atkins on our personal appearance were not complimentary. One thing, as I wrote home, pleased me greatly :

"All the men I have spoken to on this side (i.e. the Natal side) who have fought under Redvers have only one voice in singing 'the General's' praises. The corporal of Bethune's Horse who brought us in said : 'When the true history of this war comes to be written it will be found that the great man is Buller.' " I added that of course no one had any idea of my connection with him, so it was a "genuine tribute."

We were glad to get out of Sandspruit with its curmudgeon of a commandant, and after getting some necessary clothes and a clean up were ordered to Volksrust to report to the commandant there. We were received, in a very different spirit and asked for various items of information about the Vrede district, some of which we were able to give.

"Did you not give this information at Sandspruit ? " inquired the Intelligence Officer.

"No."

"Why not ? "

"Because no one asked us."

"My God, what people," said the Intelligence Officer.

"That's just what we thought," said Mappin, and we laughed.

We were attached to a "detail" camp at Volksrust but allowed to go down to Durban to fit ourselves out again and rest awhile, and on August 24th I wrote from the Ocean View Hotel on the Berea at Durban the letter from which I have extracted much of the story of our escape. It ended :

"So here we are in a most comfortable hotel, living on the fat of the land, and trying to get our leave extended by the commandant here."

The rest of my South African war experiences can be quickly told.

I was enchanted with Durban and Mappin and I were very happy there. We found good friends and many parcels with changes of raiment, very badly needed, were forwarded to us from Cape Town. While in Durban we were temporarily attached to Bethune's Horse, but never joined up because the Duke of Cambridge's Own were about that time released from Noitgedacht in the Transvaal, where they had been kept by the Boers, as it was almost the last bit of territory still in their possession. We were, therefore, informed that we might have to join up again with our friends of the D.C.O. and guard some stretch of railway to prevent the Boer guerrillas, as they now were, from interrupting communications.

I cannot pretend that I was at all enthusiastic about returning to duty, especially for such dull work as guarding railways. It was not to be always so dull, however, for the Boers gave plenty of trouble for two years more. But yet I wrote to Isa to wait patiently for some time more for my return, "until the war was over and I could go home with the feeling of having gone right through with it," because I did not want to return before my corps was officially disbanded. Pending joining up again with the D.C.O., Mappin and I were attached, after a week or ten days at Durban, to the Cavalry Rest Camp at Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, which was, on a diminutive scale, to Durban as Washington is to New York; a much smaller town and purely political and administrative as opposed to the shipping, commercial and financial centre.

But we found Maritzburg also a very pleasant place to stay at. The officers of the Cavalry Camp most kindly made us members of their mess and we lived quietly and comfortably at the Imperial Hotel and often took delightful rides about in the surrounding hills.

The Governor, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, who was an old friend of my eldest brother Harry, asked Mappin and me to lunch and dine at Government House from time to time. This invariably led to our being saluted by the sentries at the door, for they could not believe that

mere troopers would go to dine with His Excellency. I used to take a malign pleasure in telling them humbly of their mistake, which sometimes resulted, to Mappin's and my delight, in their using strong language about upstart Yeomanry troopers.

During our stay at Maritzburg a Military Court of Inquiry was held into the circumstances of Mappin's and my capture by the Boers. We knew two of the officers quite well, which, as I wrote to Isa, made it all rather quaint, but we preserved a most decorous gravity, and Lieutenant Chance complimented Mappin and me afterwards on the perfection of our manner as "Tommies."

My acquaintance with the Governor had one result which gave me great satisfaction. I heard while we were at Maritzburg that all our English friends from Vrede, including Jack, had been taken prisoners by the British after we left, and were then at Durban awaiting shipment to a prisoners' camp in Ceylon. I at once told the Governor what they had done for us, and that they were really all loyal Britishers at heart. He communicated with the commandant at Durban, and they were all released and allowed to return, so that I had the satisfaction of feeling that I had to a small extent repaid my debt to them.

With Brazell the case was very difficult, as he was a Cape Dutchman and a British subject, but he was, I believe, spared going to a prison camp in Ceylon. What ultimately happened to him I never heard.¹ I had, however, while I was Ambassador in Washington, a letter from Miss Bayford giving me news of her mother and herself. Never having returned to South Africa, I never, unfortunately, saw any of them again.

In a long letter in Italian to Isa, dated September 11th, I expressed myself very freely about the treatment of our English friends at Vrede :

"There were at Vrede a dozen or more English families

¹ Indirectly I was informed much later that Brazell had been released on parole and had rejoined the Boers. I cannot, however, vouch for the truth of this story.

completely English in sympathy though they were for the most part burghers of the Free State. There were merchants, the doctor—a great friend of ours—the carpenter in whose house we lodged, employees of the bank, of the stores, etc. A few days ago Bethune's Mounted Infantry made a raid on Vrede and among other prisoners carried off most of these English who truly formed a nucleus of pro-British sentiment that should have been protected and developed. They were placed on board the prison ship *Columbia*, on which they were shortly to leave for Ceylon. You can imagine the disgust of these unfortunates who, after ten months of insults and threats from the Boer side, found themselves treated thus by those whose arrival they have been wishing for so long. But the English did even worse because, after having organised a sort of administration and appointed a magistrate, etc., they suddenly abandoned the place again altogether. The newly appointed magistrate had to fly for his life and the returning Boers looted freely the stores and houses of all who had shown the slightest sympathy for the British. There is a regular confusion, a reign of terror, in that part of the Orange River Colony. No one knows whether the English will remain in any place to give the necessary protection to the inhabitants. They come for a few days and then suddenly leave in order to hunt de Wet or Fourie or Haasboek. They will never finish the war like this. They ought to put garrisons in every possible town or let them alone as long as possible.

“With good entrenchments any small garrison can maintain itself like that of Ladybrand against an enemy ten times as numerous, even if the latter has some artillery. The Boers will never try to take a strong position by assault even if it is defended by a body of soldiers numerically weak. These garrisons distributed over the country would serve, first, to protect friendly neutrals (I was thinking of our friends at Vrede when I wrote this), secondly, as bases of supply for provisions, arms and munitions for the cavalry and mounted infantry that alone are capable of dealing with the guerrilla tactics of de Wet and the others.

In this way our cavalry could hunt the Boer bands from pillar to post without all the impedimenta of wagons carrying supplies, which impede the mobility essential for a rapid and decisive success.

"Our tactics, which consist of occupying places and then giving them up, of trying to capture a most swiftly moving enemy with troops that cannot move half so fast, disgust me. To capture these Boers our troops ought to live like them: every man taking his own food with him, a little biltong and some biscuits. The Boers get provisions from the farms as they go along. Ours could get theirs supplied from the small entrenched camps all over the country.

"I've said enough. I am not a general or even an officer, and I have no right to open my mouth."

It was many months before Lord Kitchener finally established the system of armed block houses all over the country by which, with the help of mounted infantry on a large scale, the guerrilla tactics of the Boers were finally overcome.

The idea of pursuing such past masters of guerrilla tactics and rapid movement with infantry and heavy artillery was really hardly a bright one, and I have to smile now over a story of that time: A staff officer riding up to a tired body of infantry trudging over the interminable plain of the Free State, asking, "What Corps do you belong to?" and getting the answer, "The Royal Fedupshires."

I ended my letter on a happier note.

"Yesterday I went for a delightful ride, but alone, because Mappin was not feeling very well. It was a delicious day, warm but fresh. I took a road in a valley rising between hills that surround the town, Chase valley road. It would be difficult to imagine a pleasanter country. Little streams singing beside the road give freshness to the air. There were farms on either side with white houses half hidden among trees. Avenues of orange trees led to these, and their gardens were in gala dress with flowers, azaleas, bougainvilliers, mimosas,

etc. Various scents pursued each other and mixed deliciously, eucalyptus, pines, jasmines, acacias, competed in their concert of perfumery and everywhere cyprus trees arose, reminding me of my beloved Italy.”¹

In another letter from Maritzburg to Isa I find that she had suggested my trying to get an appointment in the Colonial Civil Service in South Africa, but this I did not approve on the grounds that I could not see her permanently established in one of the little high veld tin-house towns such as Vrede or Reitz, and I added that she was so wonderfully suited to be the wife of a diplomat that it would be better to try to return to that service. This showed at least my good judgment as far as Isa was concerned, for whatever anyone may think of my suitability for the Diplomatic Service, no one, I think, who has seen Isa at work in a legation or embassy would deny that it would be difficult to find anyone better suited for such a post. And in as much as “just making friends” wherever you are is half the battle for a diplomatist, it follows that the personality of the wife at his side is half the battle for him.

I had personally no more wish to return to diplomatic life then than before or since. My desire—for ambition I had little—was, quite frankly, to be a planter of rubber and cocoa in the West Indies and of apples and fruit in England. But I felt that perhaps something more permanent and solid as a foundation might be necessary, and as *pis aller*, why not, if at all possible, try to get a footing again in the Service to which I was partially accustomed?

When, therefore, my old chief in Berlin, Sir Edward Malet, who was always anxious for me to return, wrote me a letter after talking to Isa, to inquire whether he should back up an application on my part to join the Colonial Service in South Africa, I begged him not to do so. I was no doubt vaguely thinking at that time of getting back under the Foreign Office in some way. But

¹ Translated from Italian.

I had no definite plans, and, indeed, it would have been useless to entertain any.

After some days Mappin and I were informed by the Commandant at Maritzburg that we could either take our discharge, which many yeomen were doing, or join up again with the D.C.O. at Kroonstadt for railway patrol duty. Mappin, who had strong business reasons for wishing to return to London, chose to do so, but I, who had still an obstinate desire to remain with the corps, now that it was again in being, until it was regularly disbanded, chose to take the other line.

I was allowed to go down to Durban again with Mappin to see him off. We had gone through so much together that I was truly sorry to say good-bye, but I felt that at least there was a good chance of our meeting again in the near future. Immediately after, I entrained for Johannesburg and Kroonstadt, where I had orders to rejoin the D.C.O.

It was a long way round, but the northern Free State was still much too unsettled to risk going alone by road across country the way we had come. We travelled by day only, as soon as we reached the Transvaal frontier, and got out at night to help to man the trenches round the stations in order to prevent surprise attacks on the train. It was a slow business. At Vereeniging, the junction for Johannesburg, I changed into a train for Kroonstadt, so, though I have been within a few miles of the famous gold reef city, I have never seen it.

On arrival at Kroonstadt I "humped my swag" to our camp some way out of the town, where I was received with jubilation by my friends, and we had great evenings telling each other our experiences and adventures over the camp fires, drinking our soldiers' black coffee and smoking endless pipes of Boer tobacco. Generally, however, there was patrol duty along the line by day or night. But on the whole work was very easy, for we had no horses to look after.

It was about the 10th of October that I reached Kroonstadt, and only a fortnight later all members of the D.C.O.

were given their choice of either joining another corps and remaining in South Africa till the war ended or being discharged and returning home, as the D.C.O. was to be disbanded. With most of my fellow-troopers I took my discharge, and we packed our few belongings and went south on the usual train of open cattle trucks, trundling along not much faster than a good horse could travel. It was not comfortable, for we were so cramped up that we could hardly sit on the floor of the trucks, and certainly could not lie out, and at night we got what sleep we could lying on the platforms of stations, when we were not guarding them.

But what did this matter? We were going home sound of limb and the world again seemed good. So we sang and swapped lies and bought cigarettes and fruit for the poor Boer prisoners who often passed us in trains going south, for none of us had, I think I may say, any feeling of ill-will for them now.

A few days at the Cape and most of us embarked on the *Dunvegan Castle* again for Southampton.

Redvers Buller was also on board, but rarely talked to anyone but his staff. I should have liked to tell him how completely he had won the hearts of all the men who had served under him in Natal, but he never let me do more than pass the time of day. He hated anything like sentiment, as Achilles hated a liar, like the gates of hell. As his train passed down through Natal on the homeward journey it was met at every station by cheering crowds of Tommies, but he never even pulled up the blinds and looked out. This delighted them.

"'E won't show 'isself, Gawd bless 'im," was the general cry. Verily the English are a strange people.

On arrival on November 7th I found, to my great joy, that Isa had returned to England from Italy to meet me, and we went together to stay with my sister Elsie in Charles Street, where there was a family gathering to greet the returned soldier of *misfortune*. This reunion made up for much. Though I could not flatter myself that my part in the South African War was of any sort

of use to my country, I got the personal satisfaction of knowing that, if I decidedly dislike shells exploding near me because I have a profound dislike of any kind of blatant noise, rifle bullets entirely failed to give me goose flesh. I had always longed to know what it would feel like to be a target for bullets, and indeed, though always against taking unnecessary risks, I found it far from being disagreeable, rather positively exhilarating. This was certainly no merit of mine. It just happens to be so.

This knowledge was the only immediate satisfaction I carried home with me, but later the fact that I had volunteered for South Africa was to help indirectly my return to the Diplomatic Service.

CHAPTER XVII

CORONATION OF EDWARD VII, AND HIS MAJESTY'S VISIT TO VATICAN. RETURN TO DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

(1901-1903)

SHORTLY after my return to England from South Africa, Isa and I went to Rome to spend the winter with her family. On January 22nd, 1901, Queen Victoria died. Being in Rome, we saw nothing of the funeral ceremonies which must have been among the most impressive ever known. But every Englishman and Englishwoman of that time who was capable of thought felt that an era had passed never to return. Long though she had reigned, it cannot be said that she had outstayed her welcome. Yet it was beginning to be recognised that, whether in politics or in mere Society conventions, many things called "Victorian" were already looked upon as belonging to an age which had passed.

The South African War dragged on without an end apparently in sight, though Lord Kitchener had by the spring of 1901 adopted the only possible method of dealing with such admirable guerrilla fighters as the Boers. The end did not come till May 31st, 1902, being undoubtedly hastened at the last by King Edward's great anxiety for peace to be proclaimed before his coronation, which had been fixed for June 22nd, 1902. The Duke of Norfolk, who, as Earl-Marshal, had charge of all matters connected with the Coronation ceremony, had invited me to be one of the so-called Gold Staff Officers, and therefore, in order to be in good time for the "rehearsals" in the Abbey, Isa and I, who had passed the winter in Rome, returned to London in May, 1902. We settled

in a London house and I attended as well as I could to the affairs of the Tobago plantation at our board meetings in London. The social world was naturally all agog over the Coronation, and the "season" was expected to be an exceptionally brilliant one.

Our rehearsals at the Abbey were entertaining.

One of the Duke's sisters, Mary Howard, generally took the part of the Queen and some equally elderly courtier like Sir Henry Ponsonby Fane would play the King, and another that of the Archbishop of Canterbury, etc., none of these being remarkable for the smartness of their appearance. Who acted as stage manager on these occasions I forget, but the actors were marched back and forth amid a great deal of jesting, made to sit on common chairs just where the thrones would be, and the mock performance of crowning was gone through and timed to the minute, so that there should be no hitch or undue delay when the time came, and all the various Officers of State who attended the rehearsals should know precisely what would be expected of them. The Gold Staff Officers had merely to learn what part of the Abbey was under their control and what guests they would have to place. The Diplomatic Corps was allotted to me, so I had an unusually good stand in the north transept from which to see the ceremony, as a special stand there was given to embassies and legations.

The Coronation was looked forward to with the greatest eagerness and curiosity, and everything connected with the ceremony, which, of course, had not occurred for over sixty years, was studied with care and interest.

Foreign sovereigns and representatives had already arrived, and London was bright with decorations in preparation for the great event when, two days before the date of the ceremony, like a thunder-clap the news burst that the King had been obliged to undergo a serious operation and the Coronation was indefinitely postponed. It was said that the King, with his natural courtesy, had done his utmost to go through with the ceremony in order not to inconvenience the guests and not to disappoint

the assembled crowds, but that the doctors would not delay the operation another day. So two days before the appointed time the bidden guests departed, the street decorations were hastily removed and all London was hushed, waiting the outcome of the operation.

The King recovered rapidly and was able to undergo the severe fatigue of the Coronation about two months later. The ceremony, however, proved too much for the old Archbishop of Canterbury, who collapsed after having crowned the King. This caused a moment of most painful suspense, but fortunately he soon recovered.

I believe the Coronation was attended, among others, by Generals Louis Botha, Delarey and Smuts, lately commanding the Boer forces against Great Britain. In any case they were received by the King on August 17th. He had earned well and truly the title of the "Peacemaker."

It was always his most earnest wish to conciliate the Irish and the Roman Catholics amongst his subjects by obtaining Parliamentary consent to alter the old Statutory Declaration required of the King of England on ascending the Throne by the Bill of Rights passed in 1689. The Declaration explicitly repudiated the doctrine of Transubstantiation and asserted that "The invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other Saint and the sacrifice of the Mass as they are now used in the Church of Rome are superstitious and idolatrous."

It was found impossible to pass an Act of Parliament to delete these words from the Statutory Declaration in time, but the King read them in as low a voice as possible, and though he made every effort to spare his successor from the unpleasant duty of using these words which so wounded the hearts of millions of his subjects, it was not until 1910, after King George V's accession to the Throne, that a Bill was passed substituting for the gratuitously offensive wording of 1689 the following formula

"I do solemnly and sincerely in the presence of God

profess, testify and declare that I am a faithful Protestant and I will according to the true intent of the enactments to secure the Protestant succession to the Throne of my Realm uphold and maintain such enactments to the best of my power.”¹

One more step in Catholic Emancipation had been effected at the instigation of King Edward VII.

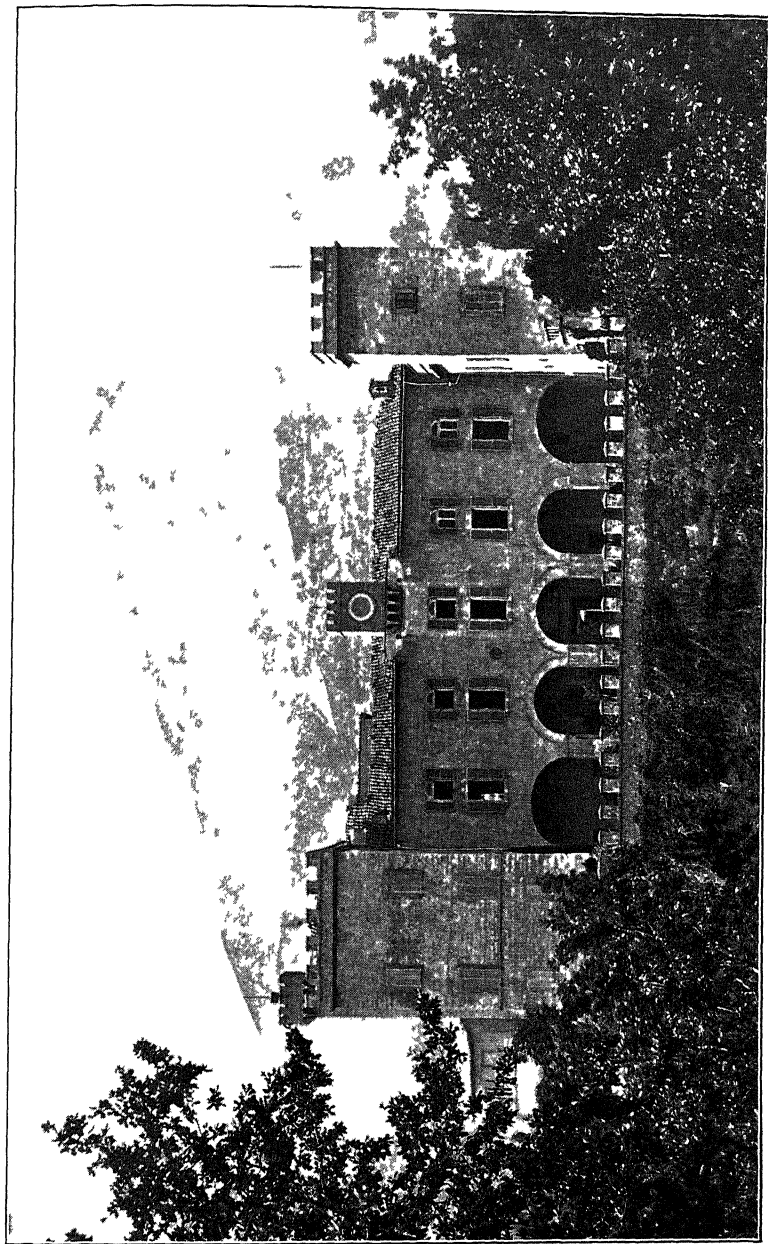
But to return to the Coronation. At 7 a.m. we Gold Staff Officers were bidden to assemble for breakfast in some ground floor room of the House of Lords. There were about fifty of us, among whom were, as Eddie Stonor remarked to me, so many papists that if Mr. Balfour, who had just succeeded his uncle, Lord Salisbury, as Prime Minister, wished to follow the example of his illustrious Cecil ancestor and sent his minions to look for such people in the vaults of Parliament, he would, on that day, have got a great haul of them.

I was in the Abbey before the breakfast and was, I believe, the first man there except the Abbey employees. It was a fine summer morning, and the great empty church, with all its special finery for the occasion, was a striking sight. After a cheerful breakfast the fifty Gold Staff men, all in uniforms of one sort or another, went to take their places in the Abbey, as guests were expected to begin arriving about eight. Strange to say, many actually did so, but my special flock, the diplomats, as their habit generally is, were not such early risers, and only trickled in after nine.

There were many friends of mine among them, and as there was no effort to keep a rigorous and reverential silence before the ceremony began, the time of waiting passed quickly enough in conversation and in watching the more illustrious guests take their places, everyone, as the case is on such occasions, pointing out with pride to his neighbour the distinguished persons of his acquaintance.

I had provided myself with some chocolate and biscuits

¹ See Marriott's *Modern England*, p. 174.



ROCCA DI LANCIA, CAMERINO, ITALY PROPERTY OF PRINCE GIUSTINIANI-BANDINI

and a flask of brandy for any diplomatic lady who felt faint, but had fortunately no use for the latter.

At the end of the ceremony after midday, the old butler from Norfolk House, who had had a similar kindly thought for his fellow men, came up to me and in a conspiratorial whisper asked me if I would like a whisky and soda. As I had been on my legs in my tight and heavy diplomatic uniform since six in the morning, I replied in a similar whisper that I would. So it came about that in the privacy of the empty space under the diplomatic stand in the north transept of the Abbey I refreshed myself with a whisky and soda from Norfolk House, again thanking Providence that there were no Cecil minions about, for it might have been difficult for a papist to escape hanging, drawing and quartering for such an offence as that.

There is no doubt that the Coronation was a magnificent sight, and I am glad to have seen it. Apart from the King and Queen in their robes with their jewelled crowns on their gilded thrones, and the old Archbishop and other bishops in their magnificent vestments, the most striking part of the picture was undoubtedly the great splash of scarlet in the south transept presented by the peers in their robes.

But in truth I am no ceremonialist. Long ceremonies, however imposing and gorgeous to the eye, soon tire me, and I should always prefer the most simple low Mass if devoutly celebrated even in a humble parish church to any long and gorgeous ceremony in a cathedral.

So I was glad when, having been refreshed by the whisky and soda, I was able to get out into the fresh air and walk back through St. James's Park, up Constitution Hill to Hyde Park Corner and so home to Egerton Gardens. I watched the splendid horses and carriages and also some strange sights. One Scottish peer particularly filled me with joy. He had on a kilt and all that appertains thereto under his peer's robes, which, while still hanging from his shoulders, he carried over one arm so as not to impede his free Scottish stride. Under the other arm he tucked his coronet, like an opera hat, and

on his head was a check shooting cap. Yet he marched quite unconcernedly through the crowds in St. James's Park and up the Mall with a noble indifference for the cockney jests that pursued him. I envied the man.

The great day having passed and the captains and the kings having departed, all those that could departed also with a sigh of relief that the Coronation was well over, and that the Edwardian Era had been successfully launched.

We felt, I think, that both *tempora* and *mores* were about to change very radically, but never foresaw the extraordinary changes that would shortly be brought about by the mechanisation of industry, by the introduction of mass production, by internal combustion engines and their application to motor vehicles (I had up to that time never yet been driven in a motor-car, and very few possessed one), by wireless telegraphy and telephony, by the cinema and by aeroplanes, all of which were in less than a generation to produce such revolution in our daily lives as had not before been wrought in the course of centuries.

We carried on quite comfortably, believing that all would go on as before, that Britannia would rule the waves, despite the extravagant dreams of the German Emperor, that London would continue to be the great financial market of the world and Great Britain the great creditor nation, that Manchester would go on for ever selling cotton goods, and Birmingham cheap hardware to the rest of the world, and that a half of the power of the world would be drawn from English coal which would need a gigantic fleet of English ships to carry it across all seas and oceans and bring back new material for our industries. If anyone had then prophesied that all this great structure based on the theories and policies of the Liberal economists of the Victorian era was within twenty or, at most, thirty years to come toppling about our ears, he would have been unquestionably looked on as a traitor whose head ought to be set up as an example on

Temple Bar. Temple Bar had, however, already disappeared, so that would have been but a pleasant if anachronistic dream.

All this would probably not have greatly disturbed "Society," but had some ill-advised prophet told that august body that within twenty or thirty years there would be no more barouches with sleek horses or powdered footmen in plush breeches, that most of the great ducal houses in London would be turned into flats, that balls would rarely be given in private houses but mostly in hotels, that there would be no more frock coats and no more church parades on Sundays, that even Carlton House Terrace would be threatened, that women might be members of the Government and that income tax could soar to five shillings in the pound, we may well believe that Society with a big S would have covered its head with sackcloth and ashes, and turning its face to the wall have retired from the unequal contest.

Yet all these things have come to pass, and, apart from other considerations, I believe that young people at least are in the main leading far more interesting, useful and, possibly, entertaining lives than in those far-off Victorian times, and that no young women would be willing to change places with their mothers or grandmothers. Quite honestly, can we blame them?

The saddest example of the *laudatores temporis acti* are, however, perhaps the worthy followers of the old Liberal economic doctrines of unrestricted free trade and *laissez-faire*, who still believe themselves in the vanguard of civilisation, but are now nothing but sad reactionaries whom time has left behind.

The Coronation over, I made a dash out to Tobago, and finding things progressing satisfactorily, went with Isa to spend the remainder of the autumn with my father-in-law at his place near Macerata, in the province of the Marche, on the Adriatic. Apart from the King of Italy, Prince Bandini was one of the very few landed proprietors in Italy who attempted to breed and preserve pheasants. This he did under great difficulties. In Italy all rivers

and river beds are public highways, and as a broad and strong torrent bed passed through his property, which at this season was almost dry, numerous *cacciatori*¹ used to come out from Macerata and sit and wait therein for the pheasants that came to drink towards sunset at the trickle of water that remained. In vain my poor father-in-law used to put wire netting along the banks to prevent this, and provide the pheasants with drinking troughs on the safe side of the netting. The infatuated birds insisted in flying over the nets in order to be shot by the sportsmen from Macerata. I once counted as many as thirty carriages waiting in the road for their owners to return after the afternoon's sport.

One day I was out shooting hares in the vineyards with my father-in-law. I was posted out of his sight, when, waiting for the beaters to come forward, I saw a very smartly dressed *cacciatore* with a good dog come over a hill crest and walk jauntily towards me. I supposed he was an invited guest and was preparing to shake hands, when suddenly two keepers, who had crept up to the edge of the vineyard, dashed out at him. The change in his demeanour from perfect self assurance to amazed petrification was enchanting. But he stood only for a moment and then, followed by his dog, turned and ran, with the keepers after him. The last I saw of him he was running over the crest of a distant hill, with the keepers in hot pursuit. He eluded capture, but the dog was taken. This, it was discovered, he had borrowed from the priest of a village in the neighbourhood, who for days after sent messages imploring my father-in-law to return his dog. Despite Prince Bandini's respect for the clergy, he made him wait for two or three weeks before the dog was at last returned, with a warning that next time its owner would see it no more. Incidents of this sort considerably enlivened hare-shooting, which, of all sports, always appealed least to me.

Fiastra was a modern house built on to a very fine ancient abbey church which had belonged at some time

¹ Sportsmen.

to the Jesuits. After their suppression by Pope Clement XIV in 1773 it was sold by the Papal Government to the Bandini family, who had already acquired the lands of the Dukes of Verrano, seized by Cæsar Borgia after that enterprising prince, the ideal Prince of Machiavelli, was compelled to leave Italy. Among those properties was the Rocca di Lanciano, a wholly delightful old country house once a fortified castle, standing in woods at the foot of the Apennines, with a mountain stream below it.

There was also the magnificent but half-ruined castle of La Rancia, now a national monument, near which Murat, King of Naples, was decisively defeated at the battle of Tolentino by the Austrians in 1815 and the last vestige of Bonapartism swept out of Italy.

What with some shooting, bathing in the Adriatic, visiting these places and others of interest in the neighbourhood such as Camerino, splendid but almost deserted on its hilltop, and Loreto, famous for the shrine of the Madonna, the autumn passed most pleasantly, after which Isa and I repaired to Rome for the winter.

As in duty bound, I called on arrival on the Ambassador, Sir Francis Bertie, afterwards Lord Bertie of Thame, whom I had known well when he was Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. He was a man of great ability and rapid judgment, but strong likes and dislikes, and woe to those of his staff whom he disliked. His dislikes, however, were not by any means confined to his staff. I remember well one afternoon in the private Secretary's room in the Foreign Office when a lady of his acquaintance, of whom he strongly disapproved because she was a bore, was boring Armine Wodehouse over some fancied indignity received while travelling abroad. Bertie opened the door, and hearing her voice, tip-toed up behind her, executed in complete silence an Indian war dance, waved an imaginary tomahawk over her head, and, having successfully scalped her, pranced triumphantly out of the room. Armine and I had naturally the greatest difficulty in preserving a sympathetic

expression over the lady's tale of woe while she went droning on without ever discovering the pantomime acted by Bertie behind her back.

Besides being half a Puck, Bertie was in business very much of a live wire, and he was, moreover, a great personal friend of King Edward, which at that time counted for a good deal.

When he saw me in Rome about Christmas-time he asked what I had been doing since leaving the Foreign Office. When I told him about my South African adventures he asked if I was unemployed for the moment. I said I had nothing to do apart from the rubber plantation in Tobago. He suggested that as I spoke Italian and knew Rome well I might be useful in the Chancery, and asked if I would care to be appointed Honorary Secretary to the Embassy at Rome. I said I should be delighted. He said he would do what he could to arrange it, but that I must, of course, understand that there was no sort of possibility of its leading any further. I quite agreed to this, and he at once wrote to the Foreign Office. Here, however, he met with strong objections from my former good friend, Sir Thomas Sanderson, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, who argued very properly that having once left the diplomatic career I had no right to be taken on again even in an honorary capacity. When, however, Bertie was determined on anything he generally got his way, and finally his wishes were acceded to, and by Christmas, 1902, I was again installed in the Embassy in Rome with the hitherto unknown rank of Honorary Second Secretary.

I found the work much the same as in the old days under Sir John Saville Lumley, and was happy to go back to the table in the Chancery which had been mine nearly twenty years before. I was particularly pleased to find there as Counsellor of Embassy my old friend Rennell Rodd, whom I had succeeded in Berlin, and who had taught me my business as private secretary to Sir Edward Malet in 1888.

Both he and his wife did all that they could to make

life in the nondescript position I now occupied as pleasant as possible.

After the New Year we heard that King Edward and Queen Alexandra intended to visit Rome in the early spring after a cruise in the Mediterranean.

Somewhat to my surprise, Bertie told me one day that His Majesty wanted very much to see the Pope. He said he was afraid that there might be difficulties on the part of H.M. Government, who feared the effect of this on the extreme Protestant vote. I heard no more about this visit till one day, about a week before the date of King Edward's arrival, Bertie came to me and said that the arrangements for the visit to the Vatican, on which King Edward laid great store, seemed to be hanging fire, that old Monsignor Stonor, the leading English ecclesiastic in Rome, who had the matter in hand, did not seem to be making any progress, but only repeated smiling, like the managers of amateur theatricals in England, that it would be all right on the day, whereas he (Bertie) was certain it would be all wrong. He asked if I could find out what the trouble was and if I knew anyone who could, perhaps, help to smooth away difficulties. He added that the King was particularly anxious that the visit should take place because he intended to visit Ireland that same summer, and he believed that if he left Rome without visiting the Vatican it would create a very bad impression in Ireland, whereas if the visit to the Vatican took place it might make the greatest possible difference to his Irish tour. Apart from this, the King was most anxious to meet Leo XIII personally.

I said that I thought Monsignor Merry del Val, who was *persona gratissima* with His Holiness, might help to arrange the matter and that I would see him that day. When we met, Monsignor Merry del Val told me that the real difficulty was as follows: Ever since September 20th, 1870, when Rome was occupied by the Italian troops, the Pope had considered that, as he was no longer Sovereign in Rome but only there on sufferance, he could not invite any foreign sovereign to visit him as he could not guarantee

their personal safety. If, however, a foreign sovereign intimated his wish to visit His Holiness, the Pope had always acceded to this request, and, naturally, Pope Leo would be delighted to see King Edward. The trouble was that the King had said he could not invite himself to visit His Holiness.

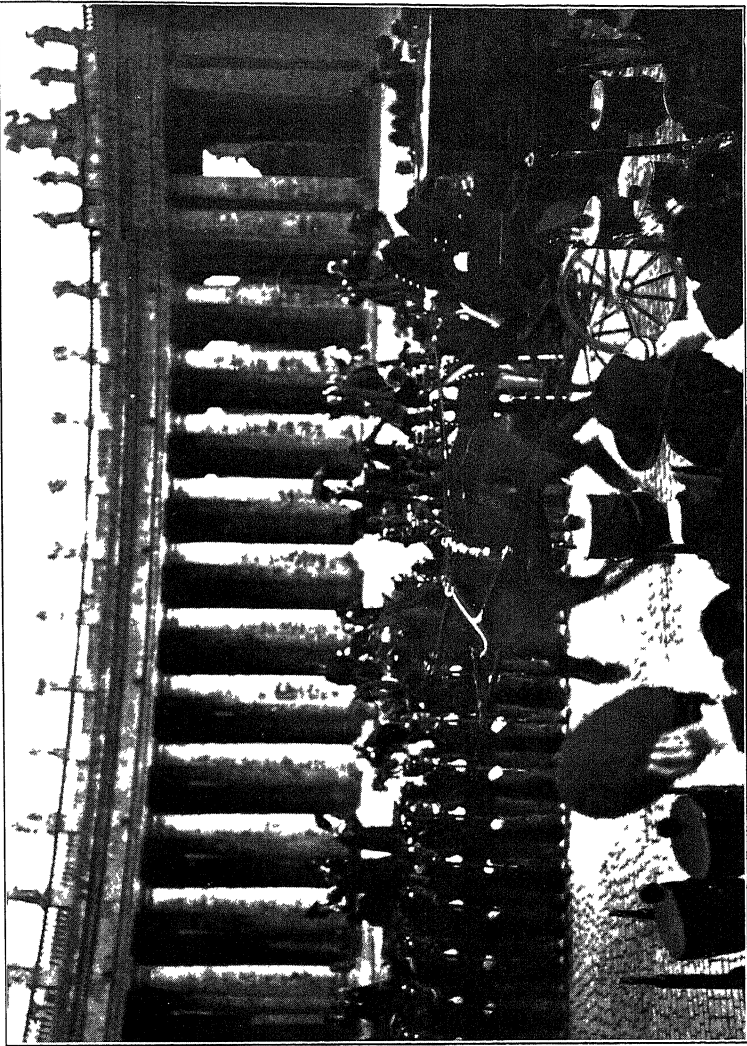
Monsignor Merry del Val asked me to tell this to the Ambassador and to ask him to endeavour to find some way out of the difficulty, while he, for his part, would work on the problem during the few days that were left.

On my return I asked Bertie why the King could not intimate his desire to pay a visit to the Pope. Bertie, who never minced his language, replied that the Government were panic-stricken at the idea of the King going to the Vatican at all, and entirely refused to allow him to go—as they expressed it—hat in hand, asking to be received. He could think of no way out of the dilemma, but he urged me once more to go back to Monsignor Merry del Val and try to discover some formula that would satisfy both parties. I returned and explained the situation, and the Monsignor said he would the following day inform Cardinal Rampolla, the Secretary of State, and see what could be done. For two days Bertie was in a fever of excitement over this question, as the King was frequently telegraphing to find out what was wrong.

Finally, two days before the King landed at Naples, Monsignor Merry del Val telephoned to me to go to him at once. I jumped on my bicycle and dashed off to some convent in the old part of the town, where, he said, I should find him, as he was hearing confessions there. I was by this time quite as excited as Bertie himself, and wondered what possible solution they could have found at the Vatican.

Monsignor Merry received me in the little convent waiting-room and developed the following ingenious formula :

When the previous year a Cardinal (whose name I forget) had visited London on some special mission the Duke of Norfolk had spoken to him of the King's intention of



ARRIVAL OF KING EDWARD VII AT THE VATICAN, 1903

going to Rome and had mentioned the fact that His Majesty had said that he would much like to visit the Pope as well as the King of Italy.

The Vatican considered that an expression of this sort, coming from the Earl-Marshall, might be taken as an intimation of King Edward's desire to visit the Pope, but they insisted that if any trouble arose later on account of the visit the Duke of Norfolk must bear the blame for having misled them in the matter.

I naturally reported this to my chief. He said that there was now no time to get the agreement of the Duke and asked if I would answer for him. I said I believed I knew him quite well enough to do so, and that I also would bear my burden of the blame if scapegoats had to be found. This was at once telegraphed home, and the Cabinet accepted the solution, probably much against their will, for they feared questions in the House of Commons and the attacks of violent Puritans. King Edward was informed and agreed to the solution with alacrity. The only party to the business who was totally ignorant of it was the Duke of Norfolk, who only heard of it some time later from me, and was vastly amused that he had been called on unconsciously to play so prominent and successful a part in the visit which he, of course, eagerly desired should take place.

Most Sovereigns coming to Rome, whether Catholic or Protestant, who visited the Pope after the Italian occupation in 1870, had always started from their Embassies or Legations to the Holy See. As, however, Great Britain had at that time no diplomatic representative to the Vatican, this courtesy had to be waived. King Edward drove, I believe, to the Vatican from the British Embassy at the Porte Pia in a carriage of the Embassy. He was, of course, escorted by a mounted escort of Italian cuirassiers, who were relieved by Papal Swiss Guards when the carriage entered Vatican territory. These little formalities had to be hastily arranged just before the King arrived in Rome, but all passed off without a hitch, to His Majesty's great contentment. So satisfied,

indeed, was he that afterwards I hardly ever saw him to speak to without his referring to it and the difference it had made to the success of his visit to Ireland later on in the year. Bertie was also delighted because the King was gratified, and so was Sir Charles Hardinge, who was the Foreign Office representative in attendance on the King.

No questions were asked in the House and no hot-gospellers attacked the Government in the country, so neither Norfolk nor I were called upon to play the scape-goat. So was arranged and took place the first visit for many centuries of an English reigning sovereign to the Pope. In a way this also marked the end of an epoch.

Apart from the events above recorded, the visit of King Edward to Rome followed the usual course. Gala dinner at Court, when Isa for the first time entered the doors of the Quirinal, as she, belonging to a "black" family, could not cross that threshold until she married an Englishman, which put her, so to speak, on neutral ground. Gala Dinner at the Embassy and a reception for the English colony.

But one entertainment stands out as if lit up in my memory. It was at the Gala Opera that I heard Tamagno for the last time sing the part of Otello in Verdi's Opera, the most dramatic performance of the, to me, most dramatic opera, in which every note of the music is not only beautiful in itself, but supremely fits the scene.

It was also, I believe, this winter that I heard Caruso for the first time. The opera was Boito's *Mefistofele*, and as Isa and I entered the box we were suddenly transported to a hitherto unknown height of musical enjoyment produced by a human voice alone, apart from orchestral harmonies, by the opening notes of the aria *Dai campi, dai prati*. It was, to use a tiresome word, but the only one that expresses the sensation of the moment, ravishing.

It was, I believe, owing to these unexpected events connected with the King's visit to the Pope in the early spring of 1903 that I was, in May of that year, offered a

post under the Foreign Office than which nothing could have pleased me more, namely, that of British Consul-General in Crete.

My desire for something less humdrum than life in an ordinary European Embassy or Legation had long made me wish for a post in the Near East, where the Turkish Empire was clearly falling to pieces and was only propped up by the jealousies of the Great Powers. Yet, as Sir Charles Eliot summed up the situation in his admirable work, *Turkey in Europe*,¹ the Turks still regarded all the subject races "with the contempt of a sword for anything that can be cut, and to-day with the stupid contempt of a blunt sword."

¹ 1908 Edition.

APPENDIX

SINCE I wrote the account (see pages 86-7-8) of the strange story of the Diary of the Emperor Frederick of Germany, who died in 1888, I received information that the Special Correspondent of the *New York Herald* at Berlin was entrusted with the personal Diary of the Emperor, which he carried out from the Palace under his waistcoat, being one of the last persons allowed by the guards to leave the Palace before a strict cordon was established round it. The Emperor Frederick died the next day, but the Diary entrusted to this messenger was already on its way to England and was delivered to Queen Victoria.

Mr. Inman Barnard, the Special Correspondent of the *New York Herald* referred to above, has written to me as follows :

“ The confidential triple sealed parcel entrusted to me at the Schloss Friedrichs Kron, Potsdam, in the presence of the late Empress Frederick by the late Sir Morell Mackenzie, on the evening preceding the death of the Emperor Frederick, and which according to instructions I delivered the same night to Sir Edward Malet at the British Embassy, Berlin, for immediate despatch to Queen Victoria contained, according to the statement of Morell Mackenzie, the personal autograph diary of the Emperor during the last ten years of his life, together with important personal letters from Queen Victoria, the Emperor Alexander III of Russia, the King of Denmark and Lord Beaconsfield.

“ A few hours after I was allowed to pass the various guards and obtain exit from the Schloss Friedrichs Kron, the then Kronprinz William placed a cordon around the Palace. This cordon consisting of two squadrons of the red guard hussars, of which the Kronprinz was colonel, had instructions to prevent anyone from leaving the palace, ‘ not even the Empress Frederick.’ Before the body of the deceased Emperor Frederick was cold, the

new Emperor William made under his own supervision a search (in vain) for his father's diary and confidential papers. Wearing his red hussar uniform with sabre dangling at his side he intruded upon the privacy of his mother.

"As to the authenticity of the Emperor Frederick's war diary published by Geffcken, I can only supply you with hearsay evidence."

Feeling doubtful as to the authenticity of the Diary published by Professor Geffcken, I made inquiries on the subject of Lord Rennell. He referred me to his "Social and Diplomatic Memories," Vol. 1, pages 156-7-8, which gives the complete story. From this it will be seen that, though Bismarck for his own purposes first questioned the authenticity of Geffcken's publication, when he could no longer maintain this charge he changed his tactics and arrested Geffcken and placed him on trial for the betrayal of State secrets. In Busch's "Bismarck" the plot is fully revealed, for he quotes Bismarck as saying "we must first treat it as a forgery, a point of view for which a good deal could be said, then, when it is proved to be genuine by the production of the original it can be dealt with in another way." The Empress, it appears from Lord Rennell's book, had never given the War Diary of the Emperor to Professor Geffcken, but had overlooked it in a bundle of papers marked "1870-71," and handed it as being presumably one of the official papers relating to the War to the Minister of the Royal Household, after which she was unable to recover it. The diary published by Geffcken was probably a copy he had made of one which the Emperor Frederick had allowed him to read, and which did not deal with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

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